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ABSTRACT

From June 1973 to June 1975 the development and implementation of a Model K-14 career education program was attempted in the North Kingstown Schools in Rhode Island. Project objectives included the development of career and self-awareness, provisions for exploratory and work experiences, provisions for job placement at graduation, and provisions for counseling services at all levels. Public controversy concerning the project-developed elementary manual precluded the attachment of project goals, and funding was not renewed for the third year. The major results of the project are presented in terms of a series of recommendations and conclusions about development and infusion strategies for programs that seek to make changes in educational institutions. One-half of the report consists of appended materials: (1) a 4-page program implementation check list, (2) a 9-page report of the career education advisory committee, and (3) 90 pages of local news coverage which chronicle the course of events in the school-community controversy. (Author/NJ)

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FINAL REPORT

Project No. V361102
Grant No. OEG-0-73-5304

Career Education-North Kingstown
A Model for Open Education and Community Responsibility

Exemplary Project In Vocational Education
Conducted Under 1
Part D of Public Law 90-576

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North Kingstown School Department
100 Fairway
North Kingstown, R.I. 02852

July 1, 1975

(VT- 102 - 319)

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SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

a. Reporting period June 15, 1973 to June 30, 1975.

b. Goals and objectives of the project.

1. To increase the self-awareness of each student.

2. To assist each student in developing favorable attitudes about the personal, social and economic significance of work.

3. To assist each student in developing and practicing appropriate career decision making skills.

4. To assist in the development of the career awareness of each student in grades K-5.

5. To assist in the development of career orientation and meaningful exploratory experiences by each student in grades 6-9.

6. To assist each student in grades 10-14 in preparing for a job in a wide variety of occupational areas, with special emphasis on the utilization of work experience and cooperative education.

7. To insure the placement of each exiting student in either: (a) a job, (b) a post-secondary occupational program, or (c) a baccalaureate program.

8. To provide guidance and counselling services as needed to assist each student in achieving successfully the goals and objectives of this career education program.

c. Procedures followed

First Program Year

Twenty-five teachers were trained in the summer of 1973 in preparation for implementation of pilot programs at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The elementary program was based on open-education techniques utilizing an integration of basic academic content with career education activities. Interest centers, role playing, career games, interviewing, field trips, and resource speakers were some of the techniques used.

At the junior and senior high level, interdisciplinary teams of teachers were trained in guidance decision making techniques, and methods of formulating individual career related contracts, as a means of teaching basic academics and promoting independence and maturity.

The placement program was initiated in October 1973. Its purpose is to develop a bank of community resources for use in exposing students to the world of work through field trips, individual research assignments, and cooperative work experience positions. This component placed more than 150 high school students in training positions by the end of the program year, and comprises one of the most successful components of the project.

The Career Education Advisory Committee was appointed on March 25, 1974, following a period of community based controversy over the techniques being used at the secondary level. As a result of the deliberation of this group an altered implementation plan for the program has been recommended calling for a more systematic development of the concept with greater input and communication from the community at each step.

Second Program Year

The systematic development process was undertaken with the selection of elementary and middle school teacher task forces. These groups held work sessions in July and again in October to develop learner outcomes and procedures for their levels based on the program goals.

The outcomes and procedures of the elementary group were reviewed by all elementary faculties, principals and the advisory committee. All groups regarded them favorable, and they were submitted to the school committee for approval. However, the elementary manual became the butt of public controversy when reviewed, and the school committee returned it for re-working of the self awareness section. The resulting continuing controversy prompted the school committee to reject application for funding of the project for a third year, and ultimately nullified efforts to diffuse the concepts throughout the system.

Results and Accomplishments

The continuing controversy over the project precluded the system from attaining the goals of the project to any great degree. While the placement component at the high school did have some success, other components were stiffled by the continuing controversy.

Major results are in terms of a series of conclusions and recommendations derived from out experience about development and infusion strategies for programs seeking to make changes in educational institutions.

Conclusions:

1. If the program goal is to diffuse a change throughout a school or system, the pilot program is not an effective implementation strategy.

2. Significant changes cannot take place unless those who are to implement the change have an investment in it.

3. Assumptions of community acceptance of a program must be tested out and constant communication with the community must take place if unwarranted suspicions are not to be aroused.

4. Funding sources, with their need for student product data militate against a successful planning and development effort in their projects.

Recommendations:

1. When trying to diffuse a change throughout a school or system, implementation steps should be very small and include all parties so that no fishbowling occurs.

2. Professional working committees, made up of wide representation of principals and teachers should work out each step in the change process to create a high level of program interest and investment.

3. Programs that are trying to change schools must communicate their development and implementation steps on a regular basis to the community through the school committee, the local media and a representative advisory committee.

4. If funding sources see themselves as catalysts of change, their guidelines must allow time, commensurate with the magnitude of the change, for systematic program development before students are to be involved and measured for results.

PROBLEM

The rationale for developing the career education concept has been widely publicized. The problems facing Americans, both young and adult in dealing with a highly complex ever changing society have called for new strategies in preparing everyone for economic and personal survival. With a proliferation of alternatives in every realm, including the career area, the formulation of wise choices is becoming increasingly difficult. No longer is there a manageable number of alternatives for a person to select from. Now, every decision has hundreds or thousands of alternatives. Retrieving this massive amount of information and selecting the best possible course of action, demands a sophisticated set of information gathering and decision making skills. Compounding this problem is the fact that the society, and the information available to it, is changing so rapidly. We cannot be sure that the information we use today will be valid tomorrow. Today's good decision could be toworrow's failure. This impermanence in our society necessitates that many, once upon a time, final decisions can no longer be seen as final, but must always be seen as tentative decisions which can be changed in the light of new circumstances. Since everyone can expect to be affected by this change, we must predict that more people will have to make more critical decisions more often then ever before. If this is the case, then our formal education system must do its part in preparing people to make wiser choices and better decisions.

At the same time that these broad issues of super choice and super change are effecting society, we are faced with more specific problems of youth proceeding through school with little preparation for economic survival. All levels of education are experiencing high drop-out rates. Too many students are leaving high school, junior college, and four year colleges before completion, and without the where-with-all to make their way in society. Another category, the in-school, drop-out is rapidly increasing in size. Although there is no way to get statistics on this group, it is a growing concern among secondary school administrators and teachers around the country. The in-school, drop-out has decided that he might as well, or has to, stay in school, but that he will do as little as possible to get through. Little in school is of interest to him, other than the social identification it gives him. He hangs on, passes just enough tests, but is almost completely unmotivated by his experiences. Thousands of students in this category graduate from high school yearly, without knowing why they ever went to high school or what to do when they get out.

In North Kingstown, since the first proposal was written, the largest employer in the town, the U.S. Navy, has closed down 90% of its operation at Quonset Point Navel Air Station and at the Davisville C.B. Center. This has resulted in the loss of 6,000 civilian jobs, and the transfer of most of the 8,347 military personnel cited in the initial proposal. The impact of this base closing has had and will continue to have far ranging economic and social implications for the community.

The immediate effect of the base closings on the school system has been a severe curtailment in Federal Impact Aid Funds. Secondly, we have experienced a sharp drop in enrollment at the elementary level causing the closing of two schools, with a third closing being considered. This indicates a change in the population base caused by the younger navy families leaving and being replaced by older urban families. Figures comparing enrollment in October 1972, at the time of the writing of the initial proposal and projections for September 1975, illustrated this trend.

	October 1, 1972	Projected Sept. 75	Diff.
Elementary	3776	2330	1446
Middle	1600	1130	470
High School	1914	1960	154
Total	7290	5220	2070

This enrollment drop has necessitated the suspension of fifteen teachers from the elementary level, and corresponding personnel shifts that have almost completely revamped each elementary schools faculty during the 74/75 School Year, and an additional 68 suspensions for the 75/76 School Year.

OBJECTIVES

Goal Number One

To increase the self-awareness of each student

Program Objective:

To design an open education activity-centered learning environment which will increase the self-awareness of each student in the target group.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the program each student will evidence an increase in self-awareness at the curriculum, instructional and task level as evidenced by acceptable responses on paper and pencil instruments and actual "hands on" experiences designed to measure student awareness of skills, aptitudes, interests and values.

Goal Number Two:

To assist each student in developing favorable attitudes about the personal, social and economic significance of work.

Program Objective:

To design and implement an instructional program which measures each students' attitudes about the personal, social and economic significance of work and provide learning activities which will result in the development of favorable student attitudes as needed.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the instructional program each student will evidence a favorable attitude about the personal, social and economic significance of work as measured by teacher and/or employee observations of task performance and/or responses on a locally developed attitudinal instrument.

Goal Number Three:

To assist each student in developing and practicing appropriate career decision-making skills.

Program Objective:

To design and implement an instructional system which will (a) develop in each student, and (b) the opportunities for each student to practice appropriate career decision-making skills.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the program, each student will evidence: (a) increased perception of self in relation to work and school, (b) an understanding, appropriate for his/her level of maturation, of the long-range effects of current decisions and self-evaluation, (c) an understanding of the consequences of planning, (d) an understanding of the nacure and scope of life long career planning.

Goal Number Four:

To assist in the developmant of the career awareness of each student in grades K-5.

Program Objective:

To design and implement an instrucational system which will result in increased career awareness of each student in grades K-5.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the program each student will evidence: (a) knowledge of the general characteristics of work, (b) knowledge of specific job clusters.

Goal Number Five:

To assist in the development of career orientation and meaningful exploratory experiences by each student in grades 6-9.

Program Objective:

To design and implement an instructional system which will: (a) increase each student's knowledge of the characteristics, functions, duties and rewards of selected occupational clusters, (b) provide meaningful exploratory experiences for each student in selected occupational clusters.

Learner Objective

As a result of participation in the program, each student will evidence: (a) knowledge of the interrelatedness of education, work and leisure and the necessity of various educational content, (b) knowledge of the interrelatedness of life style, leisure and occupations, (c) knowledge of factors that may affect job satisfaction and job success, (d) knowledge of the skills and/or training required before job entry and the opportunities and rewards to be expected after job entry from selected jobs in a cluster selected by the student.

Goal Number Six:

To assist each student in grades 10-14 in preparing for a job in a wide variety of occupational areas, with special emphasis on the utilization of work experience and cooperative education.

Program Objective:

To design and implement an instructional system which will provide job training in a wide variety of occupational areas, with special emphasis on the utilization of work experience and cooperative education.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the program, each student will evidence education and/or training qualifications for job entry and/or continuing education in a post-secondary program.

Goal Number Seven

To insure the placement of each exiting student in either: (a) a job, (b) a post-secondary occupational program, or (c) a baccalaureate program.

Program Objective:

To design and implement a career placement service which will insure the placement of each exiting student in either: (a) a job, (b) a post-secondary occupational program, or (c) a baccalaureate program.

Learner Objective:

As a result of participation in the program, each counselor and/or occupational specialist will: (a) develop and maintain a file of current educational and work placement opportunities, (b) assist each student in performing those initiation and follow-up activities leading to successful educational and/or job placement.

Goal Number Eight:

To provide guidance and counseling services as needed to assist each student in achieving successfully the goals and objectives of this Career Education Program.

Program Objective:

(1) To provide improved counseling services to each student, as needed, in career and self-awareness by assessing the preparation and experience of each counselor employed and retraining as required.

(2) To provide additional counseling services to each student, as needed, in career and self-awareness by assessing the preparation and experience of each.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

First Program Year

The initial implementation strategy was to begin the program with pilot populations at each level to test the concepts in these groupings and to expand the project to the remainder of the system by increasing the number of pilot groupings. In July of 1974, twenty-five teachers received four weeks training in preparation for the program. The training was conducted by Dr. Ronald Esposito, Career Education Coordinator at Rhode Island College with support from Orrin Laferte, then State Project Director for Career Education, and three teachers from the East Providence Career Education Project: Mrs. Joan Soper, High School Level; Mr. Jack Rezendes, Junior High Level; and Miss Cathy Nagle, Elementary Level. The training program included: An orientation to the career education concept by Dr. Esposito and Mr. Laferte; special presentations by Dr. Anthony Riccio, Department of Counselor Education, Ohio State University; and Gordon Miller of the College Entrance Examination Board on decision making and activity development sessions for classroom use.

Elementary teachers (6) were taught open classroom management techniques and career education methods for integration within the open classroom.

Middle and high school teachers (19) were taught guidance techniques, team teaching strategies, individualized contracting procedures, and developed a set of career oriented activities for contracting purposes. All participants recieved six graduate credits from Rhode Island College.

Following the workshop, the pilot populations for the various levels were selected for the program. The project design called for selection of random populations which would be representative of the normal enrollment characteristics of the school. This was the case in the elementary and middle school populations that were selected. However, the selection of the high school population was not random. The timing of the grant, which came after course selection at the high school, necessitated an arbitrary selection for the program. The result was a high school population with a heavy representation of low achievers and disciplinary problems.

The pilot population was as follows:

Hamilton Elementary

Grade	Number
K	65
1	14
2	10
3	9
4	36
5	36
Total	170

Wickford Junior

Grade	Number
6	58
7	60
8	63
Total	181

Senior High School

Grade	Number
9	106
10	88
11	50
12	25
Total	269
GRAND TOTAL	620

COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS

Elementary:

Six teachers were trained at the elementary level, two at the kindergarten level, one primary level (grades 1-2) and three at the intermediate level (grades 3-4-5). Much of their early energy was contrated on developing and implementing individualized reading and mathematics systems so that skill development could be better integrated with career awareness activities. At the beginning of the year, interest centers were created for agri-business and natural resources, phoptgraphy, homemaking, health and jobs in the city. Although these were used throughout the year and others were added, many of the career awareness activities were integrated directly into academic experiences. Field trips were used extensively at the beginning of the year and towards the end, with the fuel crisis curtailing this activity for the bulk of the year.

While Hamilton Elementary was the pilot school, the ease with which career education activities are integrated into the elementary curriculum encouraged a number of other schools to begin activities, field trips, speakers, etc. One especially successful activity was a career day held at Wickford Elementary School on March 14, 1974. Thirty careers were represented through speckers and displays. Child, parent and teacher reaction to the career day was very favorable.

During the second half of the year, the project director surveyed the elementary schools to determine their situation in relation to the program implementation check list. The implementation steps had been presented to the elementary principals at a meeting on November 1, 1974, and the faculty of each school was introduced to career education and the implementation steps during the second semester. A copy of the program implementation steps, the checklist used in the survey and the findings can be found in the appendix.

More than anything else, the survey found that many career education activities were going on in all schools and that, if a structure to coordinate them could be developed, the elementary level program would be quite successful.

Diffusion of Career Education activities through the elementary level was greatly enhanced by the cooperation of the System Media Supervisor, his staff, and the librarians in each of the schools. Using this network, the program purchased and disseminated a number of excellent professional reference (idea) books on career education and set up a central film library with the purchase of the Envyclopedia Brittanica Film Series, "The Kingdom Could be You," a thirteen film series on careers for the secondary level from Counselor Films Inc.

Junior High Component:

Seven teachers were trained from the Wickford Junior High School staff to pilot the program at that level. This team of teachers, using both guidance activities and academic instruction, established an individualized instruction system using the career oriented contract as their major mode of instruction. By December, this team had completely individualized their program and were assigning a wide variety of activities, including heavy student exposure to the community, to teach academic skills and to enhance career exploration.

The techniques used by this team were the target of some controversy during the last half of the year, because of the extent of independent learning that took place. As a result of this controversy, contracting and unchaperoned trips into the community were curtailed.

While the team functioned excellently, the implementation of sweeping changes in the system without effective communication with the community before and during the school year caused much misunderstanding and eventually negated the teams effectiveness.

Senior High School:

The pilot program at the high school was made up of three, four man interdisciplinary teams. One at the ninth grade level, one at the tenth and one for both eleventh and twelfth graders.

Teachers on all three teams operated both as group leaders, (guidance personnel) and as subject matter specialists.

The ninth grade team was made up of math, science, social studies and English teachers. To move into the contracting system, this team designed fifteen packets of activities, one for each cluster. Each packet contained activities in each of the discipline areas. Students

after an initial introductory period, during which skill levels were ascertained, were asked to choose a cluster which they would like to explore. Once they chose the cluster they were given the packet and in each class they chose a number of activities from the list which they would complete by the deadline date for the contract.

The tenth grade team was made up of math, English, social studies and industrial arts teachers. Again these teachers operated as group leaders as well as subject matter specialists. Teachers on this team developed individual activity sheets related to each cluster. The industrial arts teacher reorganized the general shop to provide as wide a range as possible of "hands-on" exploratory activities.

All teams went through many stages in development of their program and for the most part were quite successful. However, the team concept was not popular with the high school student body, and when teams were offered for student selection for the 1974-75 school year, students did not select them in sufficient numbers to make them feasible.

CAREER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The original proposal called for the appointment of a project advisory council. Early in the year, the decision was deferred on the selection of this body based on the idea that existing community groups could be used as a liaison with the community.

This proved to be an incorrect assumption, as evidenced by the controversy that arose from the community during the second half of the year.

The controversy arose over whether students in the program were achieving in the academic areas while working on their independent contracts. This, and other questions raised by parents were discussed in public meetings and numerous newspaper articles.

As a result of the controversy the need for the advisory committee became very evident, and consequently, one was appointed by the school committee at a regularly scheduled meeting held March 25, 1974.

Twenty one members representing all geographic sections of the town as well as representatives of Jamestown and Exeter, who send students to the high school, were selected. Parents, teachers, businessmen and student populations are represented.

Five meetings were held between the appointment of the committee and the close of the program year. The report submitted by this group to the school committee in June 1974 can be found in the appendix.

Second Program Year:

During the Second Program Year, Project Operation changed radically from the first year. Because of the problems, both internal and external, caused by the Pilot Model, the program implementation switched to a broader base of public and staff involvement in the development process. The advisory committee report became the basis for setting up two professional task forces; one at the Elementary School, and one at the Middle School level. Because of a lack of interest at the High School Level, the formulation of a High School Task Force was post poned with expected selection during January 1976. The elementary task force was made up of two representatives from each elementary school, including primary and intermediate teachers, a media center person, and a music teacher. The Middle School task force included representatives of both Middle Schools, and each academic department at that level.

The procedures which were followed with both task forces were identical. During the summer each took part in a fifteen-hour work session, (three hours per day for five days), during which the project goals were broken into specific learning outcomes. These outcomes were then reviewed by the Advisory Committee, who recommended that teaching procedures be added before publication, so that the whole document would be more clearly understood. As a result of this recommendation, the two task forces were called back for an additional fifteen hour work session during October 1974.

The Elementary task force was able to select and categorize hundreds of activities that could meet the objectives. These were narrowed to what they felt were the most suitable, and a manual was completed which included the goals and objectives of the program, and suggested teaching activities for each of the goal areas that related to the elementary level, and a bibliography of materials available for each goal in the North Kingstown School System. When reproduced, this document was reviewed by the principals and faculty of each school with the task force representives making an explanatory presentation and answering questions. Following this review, each principal made suggestions for improvement of the document. As a result of these suggestions some of the learning outcomes and activities were altered or eliminated.

All principals submitted a letter of endorsement of the manual during January 1975, as a result of their staff review and subsequent changes. While the faculties were reviewing the document, the Advisory Committee also was involved in the same process. Some members of this committee had reservations about two of the activities in the manual because of what they felt was a slight sex bias. However, they felt that this flaw was not significant if it were pointed out to the teachers. The advisory committee unanimously endorced the document and submitted it to the superintendent for school committee approval.

While the review of the elementary document was going on, the middle school procedures were completed. The procedures in this document differed from the elementary manual in that they tended to be general directions

for infusion of Career Education Activities into the curriculum of each department, rather then specific teaching activities, as was the case in the elementary manual. This difference occurred because task force members did not have access to as many specific activities as the elementary people, and because they felt that the general instructions gave more room for individual teacher latitude in making up activities to meet the variety of courses and teaching styles at the Middle School level. This document was held for review following school committee action on the elementary manual.

The elementary document was reviewed by the school committee for action on January 13, 1975. Because of community interest, this meeting was held in the high school cafeteria. At the meeting, members of the public vehemently critized the self awareness portion of the manual and as a result, the school committee voted to return the document for revision of this section.

It should be noted that the school committee at this point was made up of five newly elected members. This meant that only two of the board that had applied for the grant remained.

During the following weeks community reaction, as seen both in letters to the editor and calls to various public officials put the Career Education program again, as in the first year, in the center of a controversy. This controversy heightened until February 24, 1975, when the school committee voted not to apply for the third year of the Grant. This action effectively ended all major activity to implement the concept on a system wide basis.

While the elementary manual was developed with heavy community and faculty input, the concept itself was the butt of much criticism by a vocal and well educated part of the community. This group was able to effectively sway a sufficient portion of the public and of the school committee to the feeling that the project was counter-productive to the goals of the system. Because of the constant controversy over the program, the environment in which the program was trying to grow became so hostile that little chance of success was possible and the termination of the program was the only realistic alternative. (For a more Graphic description of community reaction to the program see the newspaper articles in the appendix)

The foregoing was a description of the major events of the project during the second program year. While these were going on, other project activities of less significance were moving the concept towards implementation within the schools.

These included:

On-going technical assistance to elementary and middle school faculty, by the project director, for development of their own career oriented classroom activities. The sponsoring of inservice training workshops in materials development, cardboard carpentry and an open house attended by 20 commercial publishing houses to display career related teaching materials.

Following the materials open house, each faculty at the elementary and middle school level submitted purchase requests for materials to implement career education. While these orders were initially held up by the school committee actions of January 13, and February 24, 1975, the committee voted to release the orders after purging those dealing with self-awareness on March 17, 1975.

Because of the controversy, no program activities focused on the high school faculty or guidance counselors during this year; with the exception of the activities, of the placement component. This component remained highly successful during the second year. The advisory committee reviewed the placement component in October and recommended that it be expanded. As a result, the school committee approved the hiring of a placement counselor to handle terminal placement activities and a clerk to handle the clerical functions of the placement coordinator and counselor.

As in the first year, the student learner (COOP) Program was successful in placing a large number of students in positions both with and without academic credit. Statistics on this programs activities follow:

North Kingstown High School

Statics of the Placement Office 1974-1975

Number of student contacts with Placement Office	1553
Number of contacts by Placement Office with potential and participating employers	530
Number of companies, etc., contacted	248
Number of student positions part-time	107
Number of students served more than once	30
Number of companies recruiting on campus	4
Number of student interviews	43
Number of students placed in Federal Grant Work Study Program	28
Number of students in the Early Release and Student Learner Program	95
Length of time jobs held	1-9 months
Average time - approximately	5 1/2 months
Number of students terminated from program due to economic recession, left school, moved away, graduation, etc.	20

Types of Positions held in Placement Program

Machine Director
Assistant Manager - gas station
Storm Window Installer
Mother's Helper
Automobile Mechanic
Lobster Man
Professional House Cleaning & Catering (Owner)
Photographer
Worker for the Mentally Retarded
Chef
Turfnam
Construction
Auto Maintenance Specialist
Meat Cutter
Short-Order Cook
Trainee - Super Market
Ski Instructor
Surveying
Truck Driver
Credit Union Teller
Maintenance - Country Club
Boat & Motor Repairman
Carpentry
Plumbing & Heating
Credit Union Loan Assistant
Teacher's Assistant for Mentally Retarded
Secretary for Business Office
Shark Researcher
Clerk
Animal Husbandry
Diesel Mechanic
Apprentice - Jewelry
Assistant Office Manager
Motorcycle Mechanic
Foreign Car Mechanic
Stock Man
Nursing Home
Assistant Store Manager
Electronic Control Electrician

RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

First Program Year

From a program component standpoint, varing degrees of success were achieved. The elementary format used at Hamilton Elementary School was judged acceptable by the advisory committee and recommendations for diffusion to other schools were made. The junior and senior high teams achieved their goals, but methods of implementation were questioned by the community. As a result, the advisory committee recommended additional study and formulation of alternative methods for reaching program goals.

The placement component with its emphasis on cooperative work experience was one of the most productive parts of the project. And as a result was expanded during the second year.

From an overall program implementation standpoint, the pilot program format is a suitable organization for experimental programs, but not suitable as a vehicle for diffusion of an idea throughout a whole system. The pilot with its special team of teachers, with special training, and students who are specially selected, promotes a high degree of unhealthy segregation. This separation causes problems between teachers and students within and without the program. We feel that it is better to systematically develop the program across the board with wide representation from the school and the community during the development. This approach we feel will include people rather than exclude them as the pilot format tended to.

Second Program Year

As a result of the ongoing controversy, the program did not accomplish much of significance during this program year. While many elementary and middle school teachers became favorably interested in infusing the program into their teaching, the notoriety received by the project made encouragement of this infusion impossible. The major results that can be extrapolated from the debris of the project are inductive generalizations about program development and implementation techniques and not about program products.

Using specifics related to certain program activities, we can induct, however unempirically, some conclusions about the type of activity and make recommendations based on the conclusions. (Note: The inductive processes will not include every environmental variable that could affect the conclusion therefore, cause and effect relationships are less than perfect, but may be of some use to other program managers.)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion Number One:

If the program goal is to diffuse a change throughout a school or system, the pilot program is not an effective implementation strategy.

During the first year pilot teams were operational in three schools. The teachers in those teams were specially trained during the summer, paid for the training, and given graduate credit. These teachers tried new techniques which in themselves put them under first year teaching pressures. Other teachers on the faculty in especially the Middle and High School reacted negatively to the changes the teams were making. They had not been included in the training, payment, or credits, and did not have clear knowledge of what was going on in the teams. Many felt threatened by the changes and rejected the concept out of hand. As a result, these often ridiculed the team teachers, putting further pressure on them.

To run a pilot program, a group of students must be selected. Naturally, a randomized population is the best to test a pilot for further diffusion. Selection of this kind of a population is difficult because students suspect special programs and will tend not to volunteer for them in sufficient numbers. Selection then becomes arbitrary and the population can become skewed in one direction; this did happen in the first year. The students in the program then questioned why they were being dealt with differently, wondering if they were in Special Education. Students outside the program often ridiculed those in the program as being dummies. Again as in the case of the teachers, the program students were in a special fish bowl.

From a community standpoint, parents and other adults see the pilot program as doing things differently and unlike what they remember as schooling. With the spotlight that is put on a pilot, these differences become far more apparent than other less advertised changes made by

individual teachers. While teachers are still adjusting to their new roles and are subject to pressure from other teachers and their students, the community reacts to what they see as experimenting with their childern. While any first year teacher or any teacher who is trying to update his teaching techniques will encounter problems, these will not be constructed as "experiments" by the public. A pilot program that is advertised as one that is to spread throughout a system must be letter perfect (and that's impossible) if it is to escape the conclusion that it is an "experiment."

Recommendation Number One

When trying to diffuse a change throughout a school or system, implementation steps should be very small and include all parties so that no fish bowling occurs. The aggregate effect is greater if everyone performs one small activity then if a few institute sweeping changes, and the backlash risk is far smaller.

Conclusion Number Two

Significant changes cannot take place unless those who are to implement the change have an investment in it. Since principals and teachers are the direct instruments of change in education, these two groups must feel that the change is possible and worthwhile. To create this feeling of investment, a wide representation of teachers and principals must work out the actual steps and techniques of making the change.

While teachers and principals may not be professional writers, and the programs that they develop may not have the slickness of professionally prepared programs, they will tend to use those things that they have had apart in developing, that they understand and are not threatened by. They will also ensure that what is developed fits what already exists in the system.

The task force at the elementary level with its representation from each school was able to develop what it felt was a highly useful program, and the interest that they developed in the program was transferred to the remainder of the faculties in their schools, so that a majority of teachers not only approved of their work, but were also prepared to begin using the suggested activities as soon as school committee go ahead would be given.

Recommendation Number Two

Professional working committees made up of a wide representation of principals and teachers should work out each step in the change process to create a high level of program interest and investment.

Conclusion Number Three

Assumptions of community acceptance of a program must be tested out and constant communication with the community must take place if unwarranted suspicions are not to be aroused.

The history of this project is one of assumptions that the community understood and was ready for the concept. This assumption was not adequately tested, and the available channels for communication were inadequately used.

The advisory committee was not selected until after the suspicions of the community had been aroused and while it tried to allay the fears of the community, a solid group of program detractors had entrenched itself by that time.

While articles describing the program did appear, these tended to be philosophic and did not communicate simply enough what was actually going on.

Further, the school committee meetings are a natural forum for regular communication with the public, however no reports were ever requested by the board on the progress of the program until the controversy had arisen. Regular monthly oral descriptions of the workings of the project could have closed much of the communication gap.

The most important communication failure, however, was the decision to hold off on the selection of an advisory committee. A wisely chosen committee could have kept in touch with program developments, made constant recommendations for adjustments, and communicated with their neighborhoods so that the program would have offered no surprises.

Recommendation Number Three

Programs that are trying to change schools must communicate their development and implementation steps on a regular basis to the community through the school committee, the local media and a representative advisory committee. The advisory committee further should be involved in the progress of the professional working committees and review each step that those committees recommend.

Conclusion Number Four

Funding sources, (both Federal and State) with their need for student product data militate against a successful planning and development effort in their projects.

It follows from the first three recommendations that an expensive and lengthy development effort must go into any program that is trying to create substantial change. However, granting agencies demand that students be involved as subjects of the programs from the beginning, and that regular product data be presented on these students to substantiate the use of the funds. This demand forces programs into, either the undesirable pilot mode, or into across the board student involvement before the first steps of the program have been properly worked out. While guidelines always call for advisory committees, the committees are ex post facto bodies that must rubber stamp what already has been developed by program writers.

Recommendation Number Four

If funding sources see themselves as catalysts of change, their guidelines must allow time, commensurate with the magnitude of the change, for systematic program development before students are to be involved and measured for results.

APPENDIX

A. Implementation Check List

B. Advisory Committee Report

C. News Paper Articles and Letters

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

CHECK LIST

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION
CHECK LIST

School _____ Date _____

Number of Teachers _____

Number of Students _____

1. Skill List Development

	In Development	Completed	No. of Skills	In Possession of Teachers	Used by Teachers
Reading					
Language Arts					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

2. Skill List Criteria Referenced Tests

	In Development	Percent Completed	Completed	In Possession of Teachers	Used by Teachers
Reading					
Language Arts					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

3. Materials Keyed to Skill List

	None	In Development	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%
Reading						
Language Arts						
Math						
Science						
Social Studies						

4. Individual Progress Recording System based on Skill List

	None	In Development	Completed	In Possession & Teachers	Used by Teachers
Reading					
Language Arts					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

5. Individual Assignment System based on Record Keeping System

	None	In Development	Completed	In Possession of Teachers	Used by Teachers
Reading					
Language Arts					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

6. Existence of Interest Areas

Academic

Number Set up
Number Being Developed
Number of Teachers Involved
Number of Students Utilizing

Career Oriented

Number Set up
Number Being Developed
Number of Teachers Involved
Number of Students Utilizing

7. Physical Control System which foster periodic choice for the student.

1. How many students can select their physical location?_____
2. How often can they select? _____
3. How many options do they have? _____

8. Misc. Career Oriented Activities (Year to Date).

	Planned	Carried Out	Number of Teachers	Number of Students
Field Trips				
Speakers				
Simulations				
Games				
Others				

COMMENTS: _____

Appendix B

A

REPORT

OF THE

CAREER EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE

NORTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Submitted to

Burton F. Froberg

Superintendent of Schools

June 3, 1974

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stephen Pierce-Chairman

James Baker-Vice Chairman

Nancy Armstrong-Secretary

Jean Foster

Paula Morrisey

Martha Parks

Richard Sundberg

Violet Clark

Andrew DeTora

David Camp

Patricia Smith

Robert McCann

William Dean

John Jennings

Edward Wilcox

Charles Schmidt

Fred Seymour

James Lynch

Elaine Johnston

William Mudge

FINDINGS

1. Communication about the program at all levels has been faulty and many misconceptions have occurred.

2. While there are broad program level goals, there are no specific learning objectives that form a sequential development pattern in career awareness and self awareness areas.

3. Program planning and implementation were faulty at various levels especially at the high school where the pilot population was skewed towards the lower end of the achievement contimuum and was not representative of the high school population. As such it was not a fair test of the program's value.

4. Elementary classroom pupil/teacher ratios are high in some places 30-1, making implementation of the individualized continuous progress system difficult.

5. The elementary program is not systematized so that a smooth transition to the next level can be made.

6. It is, sometimes, difficult for teachers to get materials for implementation of their ideas.

7. Communication between employers and the school system about students working in the student learner program is not as regular as it should be.

8. Teacher workshops are necessary for diffusion throughout the faculty of the concepts and methods of the program.

9. No real identity or means of delivery exists for career education in the high school with the absence of teams there next year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are divided into a major recommendation which was approved by the committee during its May 6, 1974 meeting, and a series of more specific recommendations which were adopted during its May 23, 1974 meeting.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATION:

A career education program should continue in North Kingstown with modifications to be recommended by the advisory committee during the course of the program. The advisory committee asks that the school committee communicate its reasons for making decisions based on these recommendations to the advisory group so that a healthy line of communication can be maintained.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. More specific learning objectives must be formulated at each level so that a systematic sequential development of academic, career awareness, self awareness, and exploration skills can take place.

2. A better public relations program for all program components and all population groups in the community must be created and maintained so that everyone will have a clear understanding of the programs' objectives and procedures.

3. Career education programs will be expanded when the following steps have been taken:

   (a) the exact nature and scope of career education objectives and optional methods of reaching them is planned on the basis of information and ideas provided by teachers, citizens, students, administrators, and precedents set by other career education programs.

   (b) this plan is coordinated with any curriculum which may be in effect or imminent.

   (c) the description of the program is promulgated in detail and made available to the public.

4. The attached program amendment for use of FY 1974 carry-over funds be approved. (see amendment)

5. A 20 to 1 ratio of classroom teachers (excluding specialists) to students be maintained at the elementary level.

6. Better teacher-principal-program director communications take place at the elementary level in the form of regular meetings.

7. A standarization of the elementary program occur which makes possible a smooth transition to a similar program at the junior high level.

8. More cooperation and personal contact among the guidance department, placement coordinator, and employers occur in relation to the work/study program so that student on-the-job adjustment problems can better be dealt with.

9. Funds be allocated each year for teacher workshops.

10. Special emphasis be put of public relations for the program within the high school.

11. Team teaching should be re-introduced at the high school, whenever possible, on a gradual basis next year, interrelated with the career education program.

PROCEDURES

Four general meetings of the career education advisory committee were held. (April 3, April 25, May 6, and May 23, 1974.)

The first meeting was basically a discussion of the goals and methods of career education. As initial meetings often are, it tended to be a time of clarifying issues and determining one anothers' positions on the concept. Copies of the school department philosophy, both proposals and all three quarterly reports were distributed to the group.

The second meeting addressed two questions:

1. Are program objectives as currently stated in the proposal suitable?

2. In line with the philosophy of the school department, what relationship exists between the various academic goals of the system and the goals of this program?

Group responses to these questions can be summarized as follows:

1. The goals of the program should be in more measurable terms but with room for individual flexibility.

2. The goals of the school system and of the program are very similar.

3. The goals of the program mesh with the school system, but there should be more communication among all populations in the community to get a more common realization of what those goals are.

4. The philosophy of the program is good, but we have to find out if what we're doing will lead us towards the goals. Goals should be broken down into specifics.

Following this discussion period, the committee was asked to elect permanent officers. Stephen Pierce and James Baker were selected as chairman and vice chairman respectively. Mrs. Jayne Parker, secretary to the program director, was recommended for secretary, but this position was later assumed by Nancy Armstrong.

Sub-committees were next selected to begin investigation of the program and to make recommendations for this report.

Sub-committee appointments were as follows:

(ELEMENTARY)

Jean Foster
Paula Morrissey
Stephen Pierce
Martha Parks
Nancy Armstrong
James Baker
Richard Sundburg

(JUNIOR HIGH)

Violet Clark
Andrew Detora
David Camp
Patricia Smith
Robert McCann
William Dean

(SENIOR HIGH)

John Jennings
Edward Wilcox
Charles Schmidt
Fred Seymour
James Lynch
Elaine Johnston
William Mudge

The sub-committees were asked to meet with Mr. Laferte and then to move into the schools to speak with principals, teachers and students.

The third meeting included preliminary reports from each sub-committee and a general recommendation that the program should continue in North Kingstown with modifications to be recommended by the advisory council. Members were instructed to continue their exploration of the program and to formulate more specific recommendations for this report.

The fourth meeting was a lengthy session made up of the sub-committee meetings for the first portion and a general meeting where specific findings were discussed and recommendations made and voted on.

Copies of committee memos, including minutes of the four meetings are available at the career education office.

CAREER EDUCATION-NORTH KINGSTOWN

APPLICATION
FOR
AMENDMENT OF SECOND YEAR PROGRAM
TO INCLUDE
FIRST YEAR CARRY-OVER FUNDS

JULY 1, 1974 TO JUNE 30, 1975

EXEMPLARY PROJECT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

CONDUCTED UNDER

PART D OF PUBLIC LAW 90-576

PROJECT NUMBER V-361102
GRANT NUMBER OEG-0-73-5304

PART I

PROBLEM ADDRESSED:

It had become evident over the first program year that a sequential curricula approach must be developed for the areas of career awareness/ exploration and decision making, to eliminate duplication and to abet the diffusion and implementation of the program throughout the schools of the district. What is needed is a set of specific objectives in each area assigned to the various educational levels in the system, (pre-primary, primary, intermediate, junior high, and senior high school.) Just as we are attempting to systematize out academic curriculum to encourage individualization and to institute a continuous progress system, so must we do this with the career and self oriented curriculum areas.

PROCESS OBJECTIVES:

1. A task force of elementary teachers will develop a sequential list of objectives for pre-primary, primary, and intermediate levels in career awareness, self awareness, independence, and decision making in conjunction with the elementary sub-committee of the career advisory committee.

2. A task force of junior high school teachers and counselors will develop a sequential list of objectives for the junior high level in career exploration, self exploration, and decision making in conjunction with the secondary sub-committee of the career advisory committee.

3. A task force of senior high school teachers will develop a sequential list of objectives for the high school level in career exploration, self exploration, decision making, career readiness skills, and career preparation, decision making, career readiness skills, and career preparation in conjunction with the high school sub-committee of the career advisory council.

PROCEDURES

At each level interested teachers will be asked to volunteer for work on the task forces. At the elementary level, we will be asked for two volunteers from each school, one at the pre-primary/primary level, one at the intermediate level, one counselor, one art teacher, one music teacher, and one physical education teacher. At the junior high school level, we will ask for a representative each from the specialty areas of art, home economics, physical education, music, industrial arts, and counseling. At the high school level, we will ask for two representatives each from English, social studies, science and math departments and one each from the art, music, physical education, industrial arts, business, home economics, foreign language, and guidance departments. Each level will also have a representative(s) of the career education advisory council working with them. The work sessions will fall on three consecutive weeks during July. Each session will be for three hours per day, five days per week, a total of fifteen hours, Teachers will be paid at a rate of $6.00 per hour.

The working committees will be provided with objective lists from as many sources as possible from which to select or develop their own. At the minimum each committee will have completed its list of objectives by the end of the session.

If possible each will then make recommendations for alternative means of attaining the objectives at each level.

EVALUATION:

The third party evaluator, (Cedar Associates)will check each objective list to determine completeness and applicability to the project objectives and make recommendations accordingly.

PART II

PROBLEM ADDRESSED:

The hands-on experience is one of the most important aspects of the career exploratory program. The industrial arts program at the high school has provided hands-on experiences throughout its history. However, the programs as they have been set up provide a narrow range of career experiences and very nearly represent preparatory programs rather than exploratory programs. To diversify the experiences in the shops in order to provide more options for exploration the industrial arts department has designed a program for ninth and tenth graders which is called the career cluster.

PROCESS OBJECTIVE:

1. The industrial arts department will implement a program in seven industrial arts areas which exposes 9th and 10th grade students to hands-on experiences in as many occupations in those areas as possible.

PROCEDURES:

Ninth grade students who select the program will take part in seven, five week units in drafting, machine shop, metals, wood working/construction, resource development, recreational mechanics and electricity. Experiences in all areas while introducing skills basic to each area will emphasize the alternative careers related to each area and provide students with realistic experiences (work sampling) through which they can evaluate their own skills, interests, and aptitudes, in relation to each occupation.

Tenth grade students will select four of the seven areas for more in depth exploration, one each quarter.

This two year exploratory program will form the basis for preparatory activities in eleventh and twelfth grades either in advanced courses or in the community in cooperative education, on the job training positions.

EVALUATION:

The third party evaluator will monitor program implementation to insure that students are exploring occupations and not just learning skills. Students and teachers will be interviewed about the activities in the program with emphasis on numbers and types of careers which can be or have been explored in each of the components.

Evaluators will make recommendations on the relationship of the effect of this program to the realization of project goals.

PART III

Materials, both commercial and teacher, made for career education, have proliferated during the past two years. The number of alternatives open to teachers now is staggering, and evaluation of each option has become an impossibility. We have found that the presence of good, easily used, materials is one of the most effective means of diffusion and adoption of career education practices by teachers.

In order to ameliorate the problem of determining what materials to purchase for each objective at each grade level, we propose to collect and classify as many materials as possible by reading level and objective, and to include review sources where available.

PROCESS OBJECTIVE:

Three school librarians will be hired to work for two weeks, fifteen hours per week. Each librarian will review available materials in the school system and classify them by location, reading level, grade level and career education objective.

Review sources will be cited. Commercial materials not in the system will be classified from publishers' catalogues and review sources. An extensive list of materials, resources and activities will be feasibly generated from the available materials.

EVALUATION:

The third party evaluator will review the bibliography, and make recommendations on completeness and applicability to attainment of project goals.

APPENDIX C

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

NORTH KINGSTOWN STANDARD TIMES

AND

PROVIDENCE JOURNAL AND EVENING BULLETIN

Careers Program Secures Grant

By ARNOLD B. AJELLO

The North Kingstown school system has won a direct federal grant of $111,253 for a career education program.

The first installment of the potential three-year grant was announced yesterday by Sen. Claiborne Pell.

Unlike most grants from Washington, the North Kingstown program was approved directly by the federal government and will be funded without imposition of the state bureaucracy.

Nelson F. Ashline, assistant commissioner for academic services for the state Department of Education, explained yesterday that the state reviewed eight or 10 applications for the grant and sent its findings to Washington for evaluation.

The final choice was up to the federal government, he added.

For a school system faced with difficult times ahead, the news should be particularly welcome.

About a third of the town's 7,200 students could leave the system with the closing of the Quonset Point Naval Air Station.

The enrollment is expected to drop less than that amount, but for several months, the pending Naval cutback and the school's austerity budget have prompted mostly dour stories and pessimism.

Mr. Ashline speculated that the North Kingstown application was chosen because town school officials presented "a well-defined program. They know where they're going and how to get there."

This is the state's second go-round for a career awareness program, with federal funds, involving an entire school system, according to Mr. Ashline. East Providence won a similar grant for the past academic year.

The assistant commissioner said the state avoided recommending one of the applicants and instead rated each according to varied and numerous criteria suggested by Washington.

George T. Sprague, director of curriculum, said three schools will participate the first year in a pilot project.

If the project passes intensive and first-hand review by federal authorities, the remaining two years would be funded and would include all schools in the system, according to Mr. Sprague.

Coordinator for federal programs in North Kingstown is Deputy Supt. Burton Froberg, who is an applicant for the school system's top spot, with the retirement of Supt. John W. Rose.

Although the grant is associated with the Vocational Education Act, Mr. Sprague stressed yesterday that career awareness, and not vocation training, is intended.

The town's application to the state Department of Education suggested "closing the gap between the working world and the world of education with decision-making skills necessary to make the choice of a life career," he explained.

education are scheduled to visit North Kingstown during the three-year program to advise, evaluate and observe.

One of them, according to Mr. Sprague, is Gordon Miller, who is closely associated with career awareness with the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J.

Mr. Sprague said the career program will include kindergarten through grade 12 and two years beyond graduation.

The two-year follow-up will attempt to deal with students dissatisfied with either their job or their choice of advanced studies.

An occupational counselor will be available evenings for the graduates and will "place heavy emphasis on placement," Mr. Sprague said.

Up to grade six, the program deals with career awareness, as is being done at the Forest Park School.

Grades seven through nine will concentrate on specific career clusters, and high school students will receive specific training for a career of their interest, according to Mr. Sprague.

Next week begins a training program for 27 administrators and teachers at the Hamilton and the junior and senior high schools, under the direction of Dr. Ronald Esposito.

Dr. Esposito is at Rhode Island College and is involved in social and educational research for the state.

Providence Evening Bulletin

With a $3,000 state grant, about 100 students at the Forest Park School are currently enrolled in a career awareness program opening them to the world of photography, wood working, earth science and several other fields.

Politicians, telephone repair crews and representatives of a garbage disposal company visited the school to explain their joint contribution to the career cluster of public service.

Mr. Sprague said more than 100 local firms pledged to participate in the expanded career project slated next academic year at the Hamilton School, Wickford Junior High School and North Kingstown High School.

The town now is advertising for a project director. The director will be assisted by an advisory group comprised of parents and representatives of the participating companies.

National consultants on edu-

Begins work Aug. 13

Career education director named

The new career education program to begin this fall in North Kingstown's schools has received a large boost toward success with the appointment of a highly-regarded educator as its director.

Orrin Laferte, present director of career education for the entire state, will begin full-time leadership of the local program beginning August 13 on a semi-loan basis. He will be paid from the federal grant for the program recently recieved by the town. Mr. Laferte, hopefully, will remain here for three years provided the grant is renewed for each of the next two years.

Mr. Laferte's entire background is in career education with the bulk of his experience coming from heading federal manpower defense training programs. Those are the programs which "recycle" federal defense workers displaced from one job into new careers. He is also a trained counselor, as well as a teacher with extensive experience with dropouts and displaced adults.

The program director has been working with Dr. Roland Esposito of Rhode Island College in intensive training of three teams of North Kingstown teachers who will be involved in the career education program's pilot project year beginning in September.

In addition to Mr. Laferte, two other school department personnel will be assigned to the career program as it begins its unique life on the local, and state, education scene.

Positions for an evening counselor and an occupational placement coordinator will be filled by mid-August to assist Mr. Laferte.

The evening counselor will meet with North Kingstown youngsters who have left school for various reasons but would still like some help with establishing a career. Adults may also take advantage of this service. The counselor will try to point any persons toward the training, in or out of school, needed for the career they choose.

The placement coordinator will place youngsters on jobs after school or during summers, arrange field trips to job locales for observation, and set up shadow jobs where students will follow a career person through their daily paces to study that particular occupation. This latter, is especially designed for junior high are students who, legally, are under working age.

The key to the entire program, as described by George T. Sprague, school department curriculum director, is a constant building in the students of decision making skills—recognizing what they can and can't do careerwise and then making decisions from there.

"A career decision should be based on factual information the student has developed himself or herself," he said.

This also changes the concept of the teacher from an information dispenser to a person directing students to learning situations, Mr. Sprague added.

Basically, the program will be working on a team teaching concept, he noted, with a team responsible for the student's total education. The student may have to go outside the team for some courses but these would be arranged in conjunction with the team, Mr. Sprague explained.

The students and teachers will enter into "contracts" for each subject area in their yearly schedule. These will detail how each subject relates to various career fields and what the student is expected to achieve, how they will achieve those things, and how the achievement will be evaluated.

Once Mr. Laferte appears on the scene full time, school officials expect the program to really begin moving. Though they fully expect rough spots, they are very hopeful the local program will be a great success and guide for career education nationwide.

July 19, 1973
The Standard-Times

Career education

A basic tool

A basic learning tool in North Kingstown's new career education program will be simple three-by-five inch cards, each carrying a different activity designed to develop a student's basic knowledge and specific information about careers.

Each grade level has different activity cards which increase in complexity and demand greater effort as the student passes upward through school.

The cards are numbered and each lists a subject area and a career cluster. For example, a card might have as an area mathematics and a cluster of public service. This would mean the math involved will be that used by a person in a public service type career.

These are followed by instructions as to what the student is to do as an activity. There is also space for a student to initial the card upon completion of the activity.

Here are several examples:

—Area is math and cluster is transportation. Activity is construct a scale model of a railroad car and write a short description.

The math involved would be mainly measurement and learning how to scale sizes from full to partial in order to make a model. As an additional learning ingredient, the student must also express himself or herself in writing.

—Area is English and cluster is public service. Activity is find out and make a chart or map showing the steps or places a letter goes through, either in the post office or from North Kingstown to Los Angeles.

The English again comes in through writing the results of the research. A bonus is the research — the student must go to the appropriate sources, either in books or to the post office, to find the needed information. Also thrown in is some geography as the student traces the path of the letter.

This could lead a student to an interest in a postal service career.

—Area is social studies and cluster is marine sciences. Activity is to write a report on the importance of commercial fishing in the 1700's and 1800's.

Again research and English expression come in as well as history and geography. Economics will also be included along with a little math as the student delves into the facts and figures of fishing.

A career as a commercial fisherman is the tendency here perhaps but it could also be a prelude to further marine science study, a natural with URI nearby.

—Area is science and cluster is fine arts. Activity is develop a roll of either color or black and white photographic film.

This mixes math, chemistry and physical science as the student most likely will have to prepare the developing solutions. Involved will be measurements of compounds, amounts, and temperatures. The fine arts aspect comes in mostly in the shooting of the pictures and what is done with the final prints.

Obviously a career in photography could come out of this activity but could take many forms. There is photography per se or possibly photographic research, chemistry, or art layout work.

As these few examples illustrate, the career education concept helps present a complete, well-rounded learning process while allowing each student to find a career possibility and thus a salable skill in the world of work.

July 19, 1973
The Standard - Times

STANDARD-TIMES 9/6/73

NK's career ed. director

He'll help them know 'why'

"This society does not give students responsibility and allow them to make decisions."

This view, expressed by Orrin Laferte, director of North Kingstown's pilot career education program, will begin changing when that project gets underway this fall. The program will bring an organizational change to the school and, Mr. Laferte hopes, shift the emphasis and direction of both elementary and secondary education here.

"Students are always asking 'Why do I have to do this'? And most teachers, after reciting a few of the usual platitudes, can't come up with anything but 'Because I said so.' Mr. Laferte said.

He feels that by giving students more choice in what they are doing, they will have the tools to answer their own often-asked "why".

Under the new program, students from kindergarten right up to grade 12 will work at their own level of competence, towards a particular goal or career. Although the schools will continue to teach basic academic skills which have traditionally been part of education, an added function of the system will be to provide information about careers and expose students to what is available.

As the state Project Director of Career Education, Mr. Laferte ran a similar experimental program in East Providence last year. He is presently on loan to the town to administer the three-year, federally funded project in North Kingstown.

The project itself was devised by the 31-year-old educator, who has also served as a training consultant, guidance coordinator, basic education counselor and basic education teacher for the Manpower Development and Training Program.

As part of the program on the elementary level, the student-facing-teacher classroom format will be replaced with a self-contained career education classroom with a variety of interest centers, Mr. Laferte explained. Some examples of centers planned, for example at Hamilton Elementary School, are a consumer and homemaking center, a construction and environment center, and a makeup and hairdressing center.

Mr. Laferte said these centers will "provide experience such as using tools, developing pictures, growing plants and other activities which have a high motivational value for the elementary child in addition to increasing his awareness of the world around him."

Students will be able to use their math or reading skills to learn about occupations which interest them, said Mr. Laferte.

A variety of field trips will be arranged to expose elementary

(Please turn to back page)

(Standard-Times photo)

CAREER EDUCATION Director Orrin Laferte ponders an interviewer's question about his teaching philosophy. Mr. Laferte, who is on loan from the state to North Kingstown, will organize and coordinate the pilot project in the local system.

He'll help them know 'why'

(Continued from page 1)

students to a broad range of occupations and fields of study.

"On the secondary level, (junior high and high school) we're scraping the notion of a home-room teacher who does little but take attendance, make announcements and collect milk money," Mr. Laferte said. "Teachers will be attending workshops and be trained as group leaders who provide guidance in developing work habits and attitudes, and provide information about jobs."

Students will explore anywhere from eight to 15 areas of training. Once a tentative job decision is made, each student will enter a contract with the teacher describing what is expected of him, how each of his courses relates to his career decision, and how his achievement will be evaluated.

The importance of having students work at their own skill level is that they can achieve built-in success with a certain degree of challenge, said Mr. Laferte.

A co-op system will gradually be implemented where junior and senior students can spend about half their school hours working in their chosen field in the community. Employers' reports will also be used in each student's evaluation.

The school system plans to hire a placement coordinator to build a list of community resources which can provide students with on-site exploration, research, and experience, Mr. Laferte noted.

There is no limit to possible areas of study, he added.

"Anything you can explore and we can get information about will be available. If we can't find it in the school, we'll have to get it somewhere else," he said.

Mr. Laferte cited the example of a girl in his program in East Providence who wished to learn about funeral direction and embalming. Consequently, his science studies were geared towards that profession. She also learned to design and plan a funeral parlor and was allowed to witness a state-supervised autopsy to determine if she could handle that type of work.

In her case, said Mr. Laferte, it turned out she was quite capable for that career. But in some cases, students are often unrealistic about their talents and capabilities, he said. This is where guidance and exposure to a profession can provide a basis for sound career decisions, he noted.

However, being unrealistic about careers is not restricted to students, Mr. Laferte added. A possible problem for the career development program is parents who have preconceived unrealistic goals for their children. For this and other reasons, he hopes to conduct numerous informational conferences with parents, both in groups and individually.

"The parents as well as the students need to know what's available and where the child's skills lie," Mr. Laferte said.

He also hopes the program can help break down sexual-role stereotypes by exposing boys to some home economics areas, and girls to the industrial arts.

"The long range goal of the program," Mr. Laferte concluded, "is to give students adaptability for whatever system they're in."

Fuel shortage may curb career education trips

North Kingstown's new career education program, which got underway last September, may meet its first real stumbling block in the form of a seemingly unattackable antagonist — the energy crisis.

Career Education Director Orrin Laferte said this week that the state Department of Education may ask that all field trips, which were to involve students in the entire school system, may be stopped in the hopes of conserving gasoline.

"We've already been told to cut back the awareness field trips at the elementary level and we've curtailed some at the junior high level," Mr. Laferte said.

A meeting yesterday between the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Fred G. Burke and school officials throughout the state, was supposed to deal with the matter but details were not available by press time.

The field trips, set up and directed by recently hired placement co-ordinator William Dimick, were structured to expose students to people in their actual work situations. Among trips already taken or planned were to Bostitch, local hospitals, airports, computer operations and animal hospitals.

"This could really hurt us," Mr. Laferte said. "The field trip program was designed to give students more first-hand experience but now we'll have to present more in-class, job-like situations to compensate."

It's particularly hard because we've seen the effects of the trips on the kids. They've been really excited about seeing something they hadn't seen before," he added.

Mr. Laferte also speculated that the halting of field trips would probably not affect the career education program all that much this year because it was a year of internal organization for both students and staff.

Next year, however, if the energy shortage continues, the lack of field trips could have a serious effect on the program because at that point the students would be ready to utilize the community but would be deprived of access to its job and career resources.

To compensate for the lack of field trip transportation, Mr. Laferte said the career education program might be revised somewhat to allow more students to take part in the

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Fuel shortage may curb trips

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"student learner" phase of the project.

In the case of student learners, each student enters a job contract with a particular employer and trains in a particular field while at the same time being paid.

Under that part of the program, students are responsible for their own transportation. This way, students would be exposed to those real-life job situations on a slightly excellerated level, having been prepared through the in-class, job-like situations.

Mr. Dimick, however, doesn't want the lack of transportation to slow the program down.

"We'll keep this thing going. Just get me a bicycle built for six," he said.

System-wide career education set

Learning from your mistakes is said to be a sign of maturity. If so, North Kingstown's career development program is growing up fast.

After less than three months of operation, the program is being shifted from a selected group of students in each grade to school-wide implementation in the town's school system.

Director Orrin Laferte said his department learned early in the school year that using a specific and selected group of students "was not the way to go."

"The act of separating some students and taking them out of the mainstream of normal school activities gave us some problems," Mr. Laferte said, adding that some amount of negative reaction had been effected.

He noted that the career education department has received considerable feedback from parents, students and teachers alike, each wanting to know why a particular child was chosen for the program.

Under the federal grant the town received to operate the pilot program, a partial enrollment in each school was to be included in the career education activities, which include field trips into the community and, in some cases, on-the-job training in a particular field.

But, Mr. Laferte said, he knew from his experience in East Providence last year, where he was responsible for implementing a similar program, that using a selected group of students for career education would meet with some strong problems and questions.

Another problem, he said, was that those groups chosen for the program were supposed to represent a cross-section of the student population.

"But it didn't quite happen that way," he said, adding that because the town received the grant so late in the year, much of the selection of students was done during the summer.

"And as a result, there was a certain degree of arbitraryness in the selection process," he said.

The selection process met with strong reaction, particularly from high school students, Mr. Laferte said, because although they had already chosen their own schedules for the school year many were surprised to find and discover they would be enrolled in the career education program.

Now, instead of a selected group of students in each school and grade being enrolled in the program, the ideas of career education will "be woven into regular classroom activities and training."

"In some cases," Mr. Laferte said, "students won't notice a difference from regular classes."

The timetable for the program calls for an eight-step implementation schedule. This will probably not be affected by recent acceleration of the school-wide implementation, which was to go into effect next year.

Accelerated implementation of the program will require some special effort from faculty who have already been exposed to the program, Mr. Laferte said. They will be called on to help train other faculty members who are now being thrust into career education activities.

Mr. Laferte said it is important to realize that students are still being taught, and are expected to know, basic academic skills in areas such as math and English, before their career education activities become very extensive.

"We're continuing to start them off in a tight traditional sway and only when a student shows maturity and a sound academic base will he start [illegible] ging into career and guid- [illegible] ace activities," he said.

Mr. Laferte said he doesn't expect school-wide implementation at the elementary level "to be that painful". Nor does he see the timetable for the elementary and junior high students being affected very much.

But, he added, in the case of the 1,900-student high school, implementation could very possibly take longer than the expected three years, perhaps another full year.

On-the-job learning

By MARCEL DUFRESNE

WANTED: Employers offering paying or volunteer positions to high school students with the intention that "the kid will learn something." Contact William Dimick, North Kingstown High School Placement Coordinator, 294-4581.

The above appeal is part of the student learner program at the school which takes pupils from the classroom and places them in a variety of jobs throughout the community—jobs where they work to learn and learn to work.

This is how the project operates for the 45 students currently in the program.

In the case of paying positions, the student enters a legally-binding contract with the employer which intemizes their respective duties.

The employer must provide Workmen's Compensation insurance for on-the-job injuries, confer with the coordinator and keep him informed, pay the student an agreed-on rate, and provide training by a qualified person.

The student doesn't get off any easier. He or she must be cooperative and show a desire to learn, follow normal rules of safety and business etiquette, be on time for work, attend both school and work regularly, and maintain passing grades in all school subjects.

The employer, student, and Mr. Dimick work out an agreeable work schedule which complies with the state child labor laws. They work out a schedule of organized and progressive work procedures to be performed by the student with a specific goal in mind.

Under the volunteer system, most of the procedures for learning and working for both employer and students are the same. In this case, however, the school takes legal and financial responsibility for the students while at the job and travelling back and forth.

According to Mr. Dimick and Tina Sigrett, distributive education coordinator, the results of the program and the community's response have both been tremendous so far. Both grades and attendance for students in

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On-the-job learning

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the program have improved greatly, they said.

Students are already working in the community in such areas as construction, plumbing, carpentry, library work and shellfish processing. Among the industries providing jobs for the student learners are Bostitch in East Greenwich, Dynco, where students learn welding, machining and how to operate a drill press, and several retail and business offices.

"Community cooperation is the whole key to this program," said Mr. Dimick, "and so far, there's no doubt we've had it."

The legal agreement is designed to cover all parties involved, he said, like protecting employers from shabby, inefficient work, and employees from unlawful child labor practices.

Mr. Dimick meets periodically with employers to check on the student's progress and any problems in academic skills which might be remedied in the classroom. The students must still attend classes and perform their school work in addition to working part-time. Many pupils are released about noon every day to attend their work-learning experience.

So far, everyone seems happy with the program.

"Employers are behind us 100 per cent," Mr. Dimick said, obviously pleased with the results himself. Along with better grades and attendance for youngsters in the student learner program, the official school figures show that this year's drop-out rate is lower than in recent years, something Mr. Dimick attributes in great part to the program.

He added that he's also working with several dropouts, trying to encourage them to return to school part-time while taking part in the student learner idea.

"The whole idea is to keep the student in school or get him back in if necessary and then show him how his studies relate to a job," he said.

"And then we have them look into as many areas or opportunities as possible. We've got to let them narrow it down in high school, not when they're 35," Mr. Dimick added.

Local employers have the capacity to provide those opportunities for students to explore a variety of areas. Any employer who may have a part-time paid or volunteer job-possibility can contact Mr. Dimick at the high school during regular school hours.

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LET'S TALK CAREERS!

Students enrolled in the N.K.H.S. career education program need on-the-job experience in their chosen fields.

If you are an employer in any field:

Retail - Automotive - Business Office
Farming - Carpentry - Plumbing - Construction
Non-profit Organization
This is YOUR opportunity.

THEY HELP YOU • YOU HELP THEM

Full or part-time work needed.
Give our youth a boost with their future.

Call Bill Dimick (Placement Coordinator) 294-4581
North Kingstown School Dept.

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January 31, 1974
The Standard-Times

NK parents told

Career ed. pupils still getting 3 'r's

Students in the career education program in North Kingstown schools are still being taught their basic "reading 'riting and 'rithmetic' skills in addition to career counseling and training.

That's what about 150 persons were told last week at an open forum on career education held at the high school attended by persons from all facets of the new program.

Prompted by several questions from the floor, Career Education Director Orin Laferte assured parents that their children are still being taught the basic skills and will have all the requirements necessary for college admission upon graduation from high school.

The forum, sponsored by the North Kingstown PTA Council, included a short film on career education from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and a brief explanation by Mr. Laferte of North Kingstown's program.

Mr. Laferte explained that the program is taking shape in all levels of education from kindergarten through high school and is not being restricted to certain groups in each grade. Although that method had originally been planned, the program has since been revised to be applied school-wide, with gradual intergration into the regular curriculum of all students, he said.

"Career education is not a course that student's enroll in," said Mr. Laferte, "it's a way of looking at education."

The program, which began last fall, is in the first of three years under a federal grant.

A question and answer period followed in which parents showed a greater interest in the end result of the program than in its actual workings and structure. In general the questions revolved around whether or not training in North Kingstown's schools would continue to produce students of college caliber.

Mr. Laferte stressed the fact that many students should not go to college either because they cannot do the work or are not interested in college.

He also said it is the aim of career education to provide other alternatives for the non-college-bound graduates and to broaden their exposure to other types of careers by providing sources of information and exploration from within the community.

But parents wanted proof that those students who did want to go on to college were not being overlooked and that the teaching of basic skills was not being abandoned in favor of more technical training.

Mr. Laferte noted that a progress chart on each student's level in the reading and writing skills is kept and reviewed periodically.

At one point in the discussion the talk turned to how much the career education program costs the town's taxpayers and what they are getting for their money.

Henry Tillinghast, a member of the North Kingstown Taxpayers' Association, leveled several questions about the projects' costs at Mr. Laferte before one person in the crowd cut in saying, "We came here to talk about career education, not taxes." With that, Mr. Tillinghast's questions ceased and discussion returned to the program itself.

Several parents said that students, who presently play a large part in picking their course schedules, are being given too much responsibility.

But an unidentified student in the crowd who said she was enrolled in a similar career education program in Providence, admonished those parents for treating the students like "kids".

"These people, and you notice I call them people because they're not children, have a real need for this kind of thing and I hope you keep supporting it," she said.

Mr. Laferte also stressed the importance of giving the students responsibility and decision-making skills.

"Students come into a society where things are always changing and the amount of responsibility is great. But yet they come from situations, both at home and here at school, where they're given very little responsibility," Mr. Laferte said.

The aim of career education, he said, is to use whatever interest a student has and use that interest to teach him other things.

He gave the example of a student whose only interest was in snakes. His teacher used that curiosity of snakes to teach him about nature and animal lifestyles.

"And if the student has an interest that we can't satisfy here in school, we try to drum up a place where he can go to learn and explore," he added.

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The- Standard-Times

Officials dispute charges

School program criticized

By DAN MACKIE

Charges that absenteeism and vandalism are reaching high rates, and that the Career Education Program has been "a dismal failure" were disputed this week at a North Kingstown School Committee meeting.

The charges were made in a newsletter released by the North Kingstown Taxpayer's Association, which said that vandalism at town schools costs the taxpayer's "many thousands of dollars each month."

Burton Froberg, superintendent of schools, disputed the figure and said that vandalism at the schools cost taxpayer's only about $3,000 to $4,000 last year.

Edmund Dorsey, president of the association, said he had reached his figure after talking to representatives of the police department, and said Mr. Froberg's lower figure was the result of insurance rebates. Mr. Dorsey charged that even if the money is refunded by insurance, the taxpayers will still be faced with higher premiums to pay.

The newsletter also said the rate of absenteeism at North Kingstown High School is 300 a day, a figure that Mr. Froberg said was "not accurate".

Attendance figures at the high school released by the committee shows an improvement in the attendance rate this year and on Monday, it was reported that abscences totaled 189.

Mr. Dorsey said that if the school committee could offer him exact figures disputing his, he would retract the statement in the next newsletter.

Mr. Dorsey also defended his association's claim that the new Career Education Program at the high school has been a dismal failure.

Mr. Dorsey said that he obtained his information about the program from sources within the school department, but refused to name his sources.

The newsletter said that 10 per cent of the participants in the program has been dropped out indicating that the program is "a dismal failure".

George T. Sprague, director

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Career ed. program defended

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of instruction, said that the students dropped from the program had been problem students who had not cooperated with the program.

He said the Career Education Program has had some problems, but blamed them on an imbalance of too many problem children and slow learners in one of the groups, and the brief period of preparation for the program because of the lateness of the financing grant. He said the program is being studied by federal authorities connected with funding, and that the administration has hired its own consultant to study the program.

Committeeman Nicholas J. Mastors said that the taxpayer's newsletter was making statements "without checking them out at the source".

Several members of the committee offered the use of school records to the taxpayer group, and asked the group to work more closely with the administration in the future.

Mr. Dorsey later offered space for a rebuttal written by the school committee in the next newsletter published by the association.

The Standard Times — Thursday January 31, 1974

New policy seen helping cut school absenteeism

New policies at the North Kingstown High School have resulted in a lower rate of absenteeism and a reduction in vandalism, according to the school administration.

Jack McGinn, director of pupil personnel speaking at a school committee meeting this week, cited a "dramatic drop-off in absenteeism and tardiness" at the high school in comparison with last year's figures.

According to figures released at the meeting, attendance at the high school has risen from 87 per cent last year to monthly rates ranging from 87 to 95 per cent in attendance this year.

Burton Froberg, school superintendent, said that internal vandalism at the school has been reduced, and credited the efforts of Christian Charau, principal at the high school, for the improvement.

Mr. Froberg said that internal vandalism, — that caused by students within the school, has been reduced to a rate that he estimated as "one-tenth of last year's." He said however, that no exact figures were available now.

Mr. Frobert said that increased security procedures initiated at the high school include added locks, increased security patrols, and added security measures to protect the school before and after school hours.

"The vandalism has been more than we as a suburban community have been used to," said Mr. Froberg. He said that while external vandalism such as break-ins are still occurring, about 45-50 per cent of goods stolen from the schools have been recovered by the North Kingstown Police.

Under policies initiated at the high school this year, parents are notified by phone or post-card if a student is considered excessively absent. In chronic cases, the high school sends a certified letter to parents to insure that they are receiving notice of their child's non-attendence, according to Mr. Cherau.

He said he has set an attendance goal of 90 per cent, and that tardiness at the school has already dropped considerably. Now, students who arrive late have to have a note from their parents explaining their lateness. Mr. Cherau said that lateness has dropped from earlier figures of 140 a day to about 40 a day presently.

He said that unexcused absence from school results in detention and that if a student misses the detention session after school for a period of days, the action could lead to suspension.

According to school department figures, last year's attendence rate at the high school of 87 per cent is about equal to the rate of the larger Warwick school system, with an 88 per cent attendance.

South Kingstown registered an 89 per cent attendance rate and Middletown High School achieved a 92 per cent attendance figure. Barrington and East Greenwich high schools reported an average of 93 per cent of students in attendance last year.

The Standard-Times, Thursday, February 14, 1974

Parents hit Career Ed.

Editor's Note: Career Education was introduced into the North Kingstown School System last fall and already has proven to be one of the most novel, and controversial, programs ever instituted. The following story, written from interviews with a sprinkling of concerned parents, is the first of a continuing series of articles on Career Education. It is in no way meant to be a complete treatment of the Career Education program. The Standard-Times welcomes comments, telephoned or written, from parents, teachers, students and administrators for future articles.

Feeling that "Career Education" isn't all what it's cracked up to be, a growing number of North Kingstown parents are beginning to wonder whether their children are being shortchanged in school.

For months now, an informal undercurrent of parental dissatisfaction has accompanied the rosy predictions and praises often lauded upon the program by school administrators and officials.

But in recent weeks, parental confusion and skepticism about the system has surfaced, first at a special forum on Career Education sponsored by the local PTA Council and last Sunday at an informal meeting of 18 parents who decided to take a scrutinizing look at the whole situation.

When it was first implemented last fall, Career Education was lauded as a progressive way of preparing students for post-high school years whether that means further education or establishment into a career.

The problem is that a growing number of parents are apparently not convinced that Career Education is fulfilling both purposes — college and career preparation evenly. The program, charge some parents interviewed this week, is shortchanging those students who will go on to advanced education.

The highly-touted Career Education program is being funded as a pilot project under a federal grant. To implement it, a large number of teachers went to special training courses last summer. The idea was to enter into Career Education gradually, first with selected students and then expand it throughout the school system as a so-called "total delivery system" of education.

Career Education started off at the senior high school, the Wickford Junior High School and the Hamilton Elementary School in September. By November, Orrin Laferte, who was especially hired to administer the program, announced that using selected groups of students "was not the way to go," and that an effort was being started to implement the pilot program system-wide.

It is precisely this decision to implement Career Education throughout the town's schools as the "total delivery system"

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ome parents think so

NK pupils being shortchanged?

(Continued from page 1)

that has caused the recent wave of parental doubt.

Much of that doubt was voiced at last Sunday's meeting at the home of Mrs. Charles Jones at 230 Haverhill Ave.

The outcome of the meeting, said Mrs. Jones this week, was the crafting of a set of nine questions which has been sent to the school committee for answers on various aspects of Career Education.

The questions, which delved into the philosophies behind Career Education, are just a modest beginning for the group, loosely called "Citizens for Education," said Mrs. Jones.

In the long run, the group wants to become a viable organization that can bring about citizen participation in the schools. But right now the main emphasis is on Career Education.

She and others interviewed this week felt there was nothing wrong with Career Education as a sideline enrichment, but expressed doubts about using it full fledged throughout the system.

Mrs. Jones' children are not in Career Education but from what she already knows about it "I would not want either one of mine in the program."

From talking to other parents and children, Mrs. Jones said there is considerable feeling that the children are not getting as much basic education (math, English, etc.) as they were under the old, traditional system.

"We feel they will be inadequately prepared by the time they get out of high school," said Mrs. Jones.

Learning what career avenues lie open to them is fine, she said, but such exploration should not be permitted to the detriment of traditional educational pursuits, she said.

"I'm not raising my children to be a worker or drone. I want the choice of college or career to be their prerogative. Children should have all the options. Career Education narrows the field of options and does not provide basic skills," Mrs. Jones maintains.

Another parent who attended Sunday's meeting was Mrs. Anne B. Gielisse of Saunderstown who agrees with the basic concept of Career Education but who felt the implementation of the program in North Kingstown was tantamount to "throwing the baby out with the bathwater."

Mrs. Gielisse's daughter, Helen, is an eighth grader with 27 other students in Career Education at the Wickford Junior High School. Some of her classmates like the program but others do not, she said, listing herself among the latter.

"We feel we're not learning anything," said the girl.

Mondays are apparently lecture days under the system where a more traditional approach to education is presented, said Mrs. Gielisse. The rest of the week follows a different pattern.

Students are required to explore different career fields and once a decision is made, the student is required to make out a so-called "contract" with the teacher. The contract outlines various procedures and assignments that must be fulfilled before the exploration can be successfully completed.

For example, a student decides to see what a career as a stewardess is all about, she locates the field in a career catalog, then consults a card file to find out what specific assignments must be fulfilled.

In Helen's case, part of the assignment was to interview real life stewardesses but when a group of girls from Wickford (all exploring the same career) were taken up to the state airport in Warwick, interviews were refused because communication wires between the school and the airline somehow got crossed, something, says Mrs. Gielisse, that could happen under any program.

Under another field, photography, Helen found an intriguing assignment of illustrating a poem with pictures. The school supplies the cameras.

Again, as an enrichmeat program, Mrs. Gielisse has no objection to Career Education, but she is fearful of the effects when the program is used as the only system.

Helen volunteered for Career Education last year.

"We adopted a wait and see attitude," said Mrs. Gielisse, who went on the say that that

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attitude ended when she realized her daughter had not received any math instruction. That instruction for Helen only began, related Mrs. Gielisse, after Helen's teacher was asked to provide it.

The children apparently have to get all the information required virtually unassisted, said Mrs. Gielisse, adding "I wonder if at that age they are independent enough to make decisions for themselves."

Other parents interviewed this week expressed similar fears for children who need a bit of guidance along the road. Some students, they said, are independent enough to do well under any system. The problem has always been with those whose needs are greater.

On the other side, slightly, is Mrs. Donald E. Conradson of 33 Loreli Drive, who has an eighth grader under a traditional system at Wickford and a sixth grader under Career Education.

She is not ready to give a blanket endorsement to the program but so far her sixth grader, Paula "seems very pleased with the program." In fact, she said, the girl's grades have improved measurably.

The older daughter has no desire to enter Career Education but prefers a guiding hand apparently found in the traditional system, said Mrs. Conradson.

Despite the good experience with Career Education so far, Mrs. Conradson sees validity in other parents' opinions that not enough of the traditional 'r's are being taught. More of such teaching should be performed, she feels.

The only problem she encountered so far was a special assignment her daughter was required to perform while she was exploring a "math" career. The assignment was to time an actual set of traffic lights — a field trip that ended abruptly when Mrs. Conradson pointed out the traffic hazards involved.

Harsher criticism came from Mrs. David Camp of Annaquatucket Road whose children are not in Career Education — yet.

With a daughter heading for the high school next year, Mrs. Camp said she has strong objections to the implementation of Career Education as a total delivery system or to any total delivery system at all. No one system can provide for all needs, she feels.

"There are no really good checks and balances to determine whether a child is meeting skill expectation," said Mrs. Camp.

The educators claim students are being evaluated, she said. "When you ask them whether they do it by tests, they say no but they still say they're being evaluated. That's hogwash."

It appears that the school committee went after Career Education simply to get the federal funding, said Mrs. Camp, who also accused the administration with doing a poor job of public relations about the program and with trying to snow the public with educational jargon whenever they did try to explain the system.

Furthermore, said Mrs. Camp, the system apparently has no strong provision for parental involvement.

Mrs. J. Thomas Kidd of 21 Edgar Nock Road, felt there was a need for a career resource center but had doubts about the adoption of Career Education throughout the system.

Mrs. Kidd, who also attended Sunday's meeting, does not have a child under Career Education but has been familiar with similar systems on more limited scales in Pennsylvania where she was a teacher. She is currently a guidance counselor at Rhode Island Junior College.

'Career education' a controversial issue

By THOMAS C. GARIEPY

What began as an innovative plan to help North Kingstown children learn more about themselves and to make proper decisions has become one of the most controversial programs begun by the school system in recent years.

The idea of "career education" is to make learning more interesting for the student. If a third grader is interested in firemen, he might read books about firemen which would allow him to learn enjoyably basic reading and spelling skills.

Students learn decision-making by being asked to choose some of their learning materials and by accepting the responsibility of working at their own pace.

Detractors, a vocal group of townspeople, are concerned that in its zest for teaching decision-making, the program neglects the basic skills which their children will need to succeed in life.

Orrin Laferte, the department's director of career education, disagrees with that criticism. "We're still going to give them the basic skills," he said. "But we're going to add another skill."

That "other skill" is the ability to make decisions which will prove valuable in a world which Mr. Laferte described as "one in which people must learn to change."

Although more emphasis is placed on guiding a student to a goal in life than in traditional education, the federally-funded program is less concerned with careers than it is with methods of education, Mr. Laferte said. Because each child's interest varies, the system allows for much individualized education.

"You've got to provide a system wherein they (the students) are allowed to make some decisions," Mr. Laferte explained. In the elementary schools, program activities provide students with self-awareness, "what am I like," he said.

The issue has provoked so much concern that the school committee has scheduled a special meeting for tomorrow night at 8 in the high school cafeteria. During that session, parents and committeemen will discuss the program's features and goals with Mr. Laferte.

Some of the controversy has centered on two innovations of the program – team teaching and contracting.

In team teaching, a method which is not unique to career education, a number of teachers share the responsibilities of instructing a large group of students. Because the teaching groups themselves are broken down into smaller units, it provides a "less impersonal, less complex" system, Mr. Laferte said.

Contracting allows the student to enter into an agreement with his teacher to complete a certain amount of work. "You begin with a stated interest of the child," Mr. Laferte said. "You then negotiate an activity that allows the child to explore that interest" while he learns the skills behind the lesson. "The interest does not have to be career-oriented. It can be a snake," Mr. Laferte said, "or a rock."

Both systems are used to varying degrees in the career education programs, he said, adding that the amount of individualized instruction and contracting in use depends on the teachers in each class.

"One of the misconceptions is that there's only one way to go about this project," Mr. Laferte said. "That's not true. It's an evolutionary project in which each team has to find its needs."

This year, 180 students at Hamilton Elementary School, 180 at Wickford Junior High, and about 250 at the senior high are "officially" enrolled in the program. But because of its nature, some of the program's features will be in use in many other classes by next year.

Although some parental objections stem from the fact that career education is a radical departure from teaching of "the three Rs", there are other arguments as well.

J. Thomas Kidd, acting chairman of a newly-formed group called Citizens for Education, said that the program was instituted with "no inputs" from parents. This, he said, caused parental concern, particularly when the program began on a wider basis in its first year than many persons thought possible.

This sentiment was echoed by C. W. Jones, another member of the new group. "I don't object to career education as an enrichment program, something 'over and above' but not 'in place of'", he said. But Mr. Jones claims that such a "vast, sweeping program" should not be made mandatory. "I'd like to see it optional," he explained.

In a statement heard from many parents, Charles Donel said the program tends to teach "skills rather than content." He said that while his daughter, who is in the junior high program, needs to learn skills, "there's nothing she will learn that will be worth anything in terms of the content of the material."

"All the joy, the human qualities, of, say, the American Revolution, are lost," when students read of such events only to develop such skills as outlining chapters of books, he said.

Mr. Laferte said that such criticism ignores a primary purpose of the system. "Basic skills are the first priority," he said. "You can't do the rest until you have the basic skills." He did admit, however, that the program places less emphasis on content than traditional systems.

He added that the progress of college-bound students should not be adversely affected by the program. "If a kid makes a decision to go to college we treat that like any other decision and we have to prepare him for college," he said.

While Mr. Laferte said he believes the program in its present form is helping many students, it will be slightly changed next year. "None of us want an identifiable career education grouping next year," he said.

Rather, more children will be taught using career education techniques, on a less structured basis. "We still have the same goals," he said. "Everybody thinks we have to have things like contracting. What we have to have is individualization."

New group has other goals

Although Citizens for Education, a newly formed North Kingstown group, will concentrate much of its effort on career education, it will also tackle other educational topics.

J. Thomas Kidd, acting chairman of the group, said yesterday that members will question the effectiveness of the "career education" program, but also plan to work toward such goals as creation and maintenance of a school curriculum committee.

Mr. Kidd spoke at the organizational meeting of the group, attended by about 50 persons yesterday in the North Kingstown Free Library.

"We are nonpartisan, and we are not going to ax-grind, find fault or call names," Mr. Kidd said, adding that the group will gather the facts on such programs as the school system's controversial career education project.

In addition, the members are expected to monitor meetings of such school-related groups as the school committee, committees of administrators and the student council, offering their assistance when possible, he said.

Yesterday's meeting was divided between a presentation of the organization's goals and a series of complaints about the career education program, which is in effect in some of the town's schools.

The program, in its first year, tries to teach children the basic skills through the use of subjects in which they are interested.

Members of the audience said that because of the lack of organization of the program, children are left to learn subjects by themselves, without benefit of a teacher's help.

The Standard-Times, Thursday, February 14, 1974

Rumored school exodus unfounded

Widespread rumors that hundreds of North Kingstown parents, apparently dissatisfied with that town's Career Education program, are transferring their children into local private schools are unfounded.

The Standard-Times has received several calls and comments from parents in the past week that as many as 400 North Kingstown school students have applied to Prout Memorial High School in South Kingstown. The rumors had it that many of these applications were from students entering high school for the first time along with a large number of transfers.

Guidance Co-ordinator at Prout, Sister Elissa, said this week that of 169 applications received for the next school year, only 15 were from North Kingstown — 10 for grade 9, four for grade 10 and just one transfer into grade 11.

She also noted that only three students from North Kingstown were transfered to Prout during this academic year. She added that she could not be sure if these application figures were an increase over last year or not.

Of those North Kingstown

(Please turn to page 2)

Rumored NK school exodus unfounded

(Continued from page 1)

parents she spoke with at a recent open house at Prout, Sister Elissa said "quite a few" had showed concern about the Career Education program as being "unproductive and educationally ineffective" but that most parents did not seem to understand it.

"I think it would behoove North Kingstown to have some parent education," she said.

Steve Rossey, assistant headmaster at Rocky Hill School, said there have been no transfers from North Kingstown during the current school year. Of the 41 North Kingstown students presently enrolled in grades K-12 there are one or two transfers from the public schools at the beginning of each year — a percentage which has remained constant for the past four years, he said.

He noted that there has been no marked increase in the number of North Kingstown applications for next year.

Advisory committee is needed

Dear Sir:

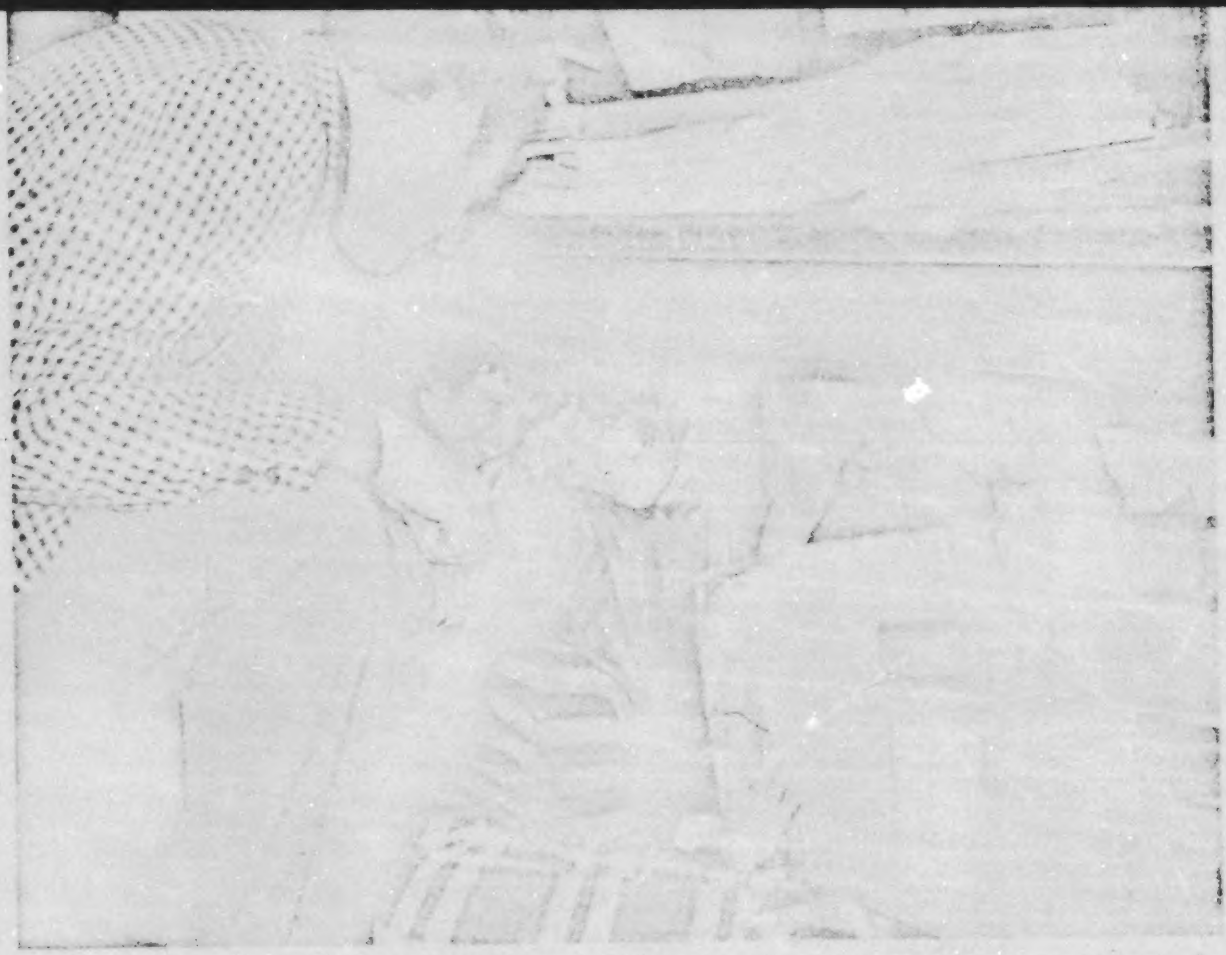
I would like to clarify the impression created in last week's Standard-Times in the article on Career Education. My statements were made during a long phone conversation with a reporter. Some of them should not have been printed alone, but rather with their accompanying statements. This would have given a truer picture of my thoughts.

Nowhere in the article is there any mention of the positive statements I made and consequently it appears that I have absolutely no use for any kind of Career Education Program. Such is not the case. When properly implemented, Career Education can be a valuable educational tool. When implemented hastily, with not enough teacher, parent, student, and taxpayer input, it can have disasterous effects.

In the original federal grant application, provisions were made for an advisory committee composed of parents, teachers and school officials. This aspect of the grant was never implemented and the grant renewal application states that the advisory committee will not be formed this year either. Because of the confusion on the part of the general public, myself included, it would seem prudent for the school committee and school administration to form and activate this committee immediately.

By the 1975-76 school year, the Career Education program, as originally presented, was to have affected every child in this school system. A program of this magnitude will necessarily fail if there isn't extensive cooperation by the school committee and administration, teachers, students, parents, and taxpayers. Representatives from these groups should meet and begin working together to see that what is good in the program is continued and what is bad is changed

Mary Anne Camp
North Kingstown



Under the Table Lab: Nelson Ashline, associate state commissioner of education, watches sixth graders at work on a science project at Wickford Junior High School.

—Journal-Bulletin Photo by THOMAS C. GARIEPY

Career Program 'Not Rigid'

By THOMAS C. GARIEPY

North Kingstown's career education program can be modified next year in response to parental concerns about its effectiveness, the regional director of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare said yesterday.

William Logan said the program, whose second year is up for funding by the federal government, will include provisions for parental involvement and voluntary application of its methods, two areas with which parents seem most concerned.

Logan toured the classrooms used in the program yesterday along with Dr. Fred G. Burke, state commissioner of education; Nelson Ashline, an associate state commissioner; Matthew Cardoza, HEW's regional director of vocational programs, and school department officials.

"This program isn't as rigid as a lot of people want to believe it is," said Burton Froberg, superintendent, who added that changes will be made "to better meet some of the objections."

During a discussion session Monday sponsored by the school committee, parents made it clear that several aspects of the program bother them greatly. They complained that there is no advisory committee to provide parental input, that the program appears to be forced on their children, and that it seems to neglect the basic learning skills which students need.

During the tour, Logan said that school officials have the green light to modify the program. "We think it is worthy for funding for a second year . . ." he said. "Our guidelines allow you to make those changes."

Some persons were concerned that the federal program requirements would prohibit changing the plan to accomodate some of the parents' objections, but Logan emphasized the fact that the changes now contemplated can be made.

Speaking to a reporter after the tour, the regional director recalled reading a mathematics skill sheet used in one of the high school classes to measure students' work, and made some comments which should dispel some parental fears.

"I looked at that skill sheet for math," he said, "and regardless of whether he or a student is going to be an electrician or a carpenter or whatever, these are the 28 skills he's going to get in a traditional classroom."

The tour took the administrators from the senior high school, where they inspected a "classroom without walls" — several classes separated by partitions working on various assignments, to sixth graders scattered through classes at Wickford Junior High School, working on science and reading projects.

Logan said he would be able to understand the parents' worries if the program were potentially harmful. But, he said, after a series of program evaluations, his department has concluded that "it's absolutely safe for all the kids involved."

"There seems to be a demand for instant success," he observed. "You just don't get instant success in these things. But the problems that arose are not insolvable."

"You make mistakes" in such a program, Froberg added, "and I think that's typical." He said that next year's program should iron out many of the problems encountered this year, and that a third-year program would, hopefully, correct problems found next year.

The career education program has provoked controversy in parents' minds since it began last fall. It features more individualized instruction, with emphasis on assigning students work in subject areas in which they are interested. As they perform such tasks, they study educational material related to those subjects.

The title, "Career Education" comes from the fact that many of those interest-provoking topics relate to potential careers. The program is not directly related to vocational education, which prepares students to enter specific trades, administrators said.

Orrin Laferte, director of the program, explained that some parents thought that applications to the federal government for funding said the program would be mandatory in all classes.

Instead, he said, administrators decided that there will be no one group of career education students next year. Some of the program's methods should be in use on a more diffuse, less formal way in many classrooms, he said.

Steps Taken to Improve 'Careers' Program, Image

By THOMAS C. GAMIEPY

areer education, much igned, often misunder- d and always controver- . is not a course but a ans of educating students, th Kingstown administra- said last night.

he comments came at a sion called by the town's ol committee to discuss program which tries to educate students by providing some topics from study in which they are interested.

For example, a student interested in becoming an electrician might choose to read a book on electricity. He would be expected to learn about the topic as well as the basic skills behind the reading assignment, officials said.

Parents, including members of the newly-formed Citizens for Education, have complained their children are not learning the basic skills they will need to succeed in jobs or higher education.

About 100 of them attended last night's meeting to discuss the program with administrators and members of the school committee.

Even before the discussion began, it became clear that administrators have taken steps to improve the program and its public image. Burton Froberg, superintendent, outlined several steps which will be taken immediately. They include:

Standardized testing of students both in and out of the program to find whether the students in the program are learning basic skills. The test will take place by the end of the month.

A citizens advisory committee will be organized to provide parents with information, a step which Mr. Froberg admitted should have been taken when the program began.

Inspection of the program by officials of the state Department of Education, including Dr. Fred G. Burke, state commissioner, who was to visit the schools today.

Some de-emphasis of individualized learning and the innovative contracting system, with more of traditional group learning to take place.

The contracting system, in which students agree to do an assignment on topics in which they are interested along with a study of skills relating to that topic, came under much parental criticism.

Orrin Laferte, director of career education, said that contracting is not an absolute requirement of the program, and the extent of its use will depend on the teachers involved.

Administrators said that while teachers will prepare the program for institution by 1976 throughout the school system, the plan itself does not have to be instituted then.

Because the program is not a course but is a method of education it can be brought into the schools gradually, they said.

Some members of the audience said that career education does not provide students with basic factual information which they need to be successful.

Mr. Laferte disagreed, saying that the schools are "maintaining the academic objectives." He admitted that the program de-emphasizes the learning of individual facts, but said it stresses learning basic concepts, which is more important.

If at least some parents approved the program's goals, most were unwilling to admit that it is working. Members

Continued on Page B-3

Schools

Week of March 1 1974

Schools

Continued from Page B-1

of the audience complained that teachers who attended a summer program in preparation of the course had not had enough training to properly carry out the plan.

'Misunderstanding'

Even before the career education program began in North Kingstown, school administrators apparently made some tactical errors which prevented parents from fully understanding the plan's objectives and educational methods.

Several such problems quickly became apparent during last night's discussion between parents and school officials.

The title of the program, which administrators said was chosen by federal education officials, has provoked instant misunderstandings. "I think we ought to get away from calling it career education," said Burton Froberg, superintendent.

Mr. Froberg added that the program is not related to vocational education, which prepares students for specific trades, although it may guide a student toward a field in which he is interested.

Since the program's inception, there has been virtually no official means of communication between parents and the schools. Parents, particularly members of the Citizens for Education, charged that an advisory committee of townspeople should have been organized even before the program was started.

Mr. Froberg admitted that the special committee should have been formed, adding that much of the controversy over the program might have been avoided.

Howard Gardiner, school committee chairman, agreed. "If we had that committee, many of these questions would have been answered," he said.

Also working against the program was the plethora of educational material which became available to persons who took an interest in it. Although administrators several times issued papers and reports stating the goals of the program, questions asked last night by people who said they read the reports showed that the material was unclear and confusing.

"Career education is not a course, it's a vehicle" for educating students, said Christian Chereau, high school principal, who midway through the meeting tried his hand at explaining the program's methods.

The principal's comments appeared necessary because of the many questions from members of the audience who apparently had as little understanding of the basic nature of the program after reading the printed material as they did when they first began asking questions.

'Career Education' Provokes Concern

By THOMAS C. GARIEPY

What began as an innovative plan to help North Kingstown children learn more about themselves and to make proper decisions has become one of the most controversial programs begun by the school system in recent years.

The idea of "career education" is to make learning more interesting for the student. If a third grader is interested in firemen, he might read books about firemen which would allow him to learn enjoyably basic reading and spelling skills.

Students learn decision-making by being asked to choose some of their learning materials and by accepting the responsibility of working at their own pace.

Detractors, a vocal group of townspeople, are concerned that in its zest for teaching decision-making, the program neglects the basic skills which their children will need to succeed in life.

Orrin Laferte, the department's director of career education, disagrees with that criticism. "We're still going to give them the basic skills," he said. "But we're going to add another skill."

That "other skill" is the ability to make decisions which will prove valuable in a world which Mr. Laferte described as "one in which people must learn to change."

Although more emphasis is placed on guiding a student to a goal in life than in traditional education, the federally-funded program is less concerned with careers than it is with methods of education, Mr. Laferte said. Because each child's interest varies, the system allows for much individualized education.

"You've got to provide a system wherein they (the students) are allowed to make some decisions," Mr. Laferte explained. In the elementary schools, program activities provide students with self-awareness, "what am I like," he said.

Career Education Director Orrin Laferte
—Journal-Bulletin Photo

The issue has provoked so much concern that the school committee has scheduled a special meeting for tomorrow night at 8 in the high school cafeteria. During that session, parents and committeemen will discuss the program's features and goals with Mr. Laferte.

Some of the controversy has centered on two innovations of the program — team teaching and contracting.

In team teaching, a method which is not unique to career education, a number of teachers share the responsibilities of instructing a large group of students. Because the teaching groups themselves are broken down into smaller units, it provides a "less impersonal, less complex" system, Mr. Laferte said.

Contracting allows the student to enter into an agreement with his teacher to complete a certain amount of work. "You begin with a stated interest of the child," Mr. Laferte said. "You then negotiate an activity that allows the child to explore that interest" while he learns the skills behind the lesson. "The interest does not have to be career-oriented. It can be a snake," Mr. Laferte said, "or a rock."

Both systems are used to varying degrees in the career education programs, he said, adding that the amount of individualized instruction and contracting in use depends on the teachers in each class.

"One of the misconceptions is that there's only one way to

(CONTINUED)

The Providence Journal
Monday, March 4th
1974

The Providence Journal
Monday
March 4, 1974

go about this project," Mr. Laferte said. "That's not true. It's an evolutionary project in which each team has to find its needs."

This year, 180 students at Hamilton Elementary School, 180 at Wickford Junior High, and about 250 at the senior high are "officially" enrolled in the program. But because of its nature, some of the program's features will be in use in many other classes by next year.

Although some parental objections stem from the fact that career education is a radical departure from teaching of "the three Rs", there are other arguments as well.

J. Thomas Kidd, acting chairman of a newly-formed group called Citizens for Education, said that the program was instituted with "no inputs" from parents. This, he said, caused parental concern, particularly when the program began on a wider basis in its first year than many persons thought possible.

This sentiment was echoed by C. W. Jones, another member of the new group. "I don't object to career education as an enrichment program, something 'over and above' but not 'in place of'", he said. But Mr. Jones claims that such a "vast, sweeping program" should not be made mandatory. "I'd like to see it optional," he explained.

In a statement heard from many parents, Charles Daniel said the program tends to teach "skills rather than content." He said that while his daughter, who is in the junior high program, needs to learn skills, "there's nothing she will learn that will be worth anything in terms of the content of the material."

"All the joy, the human qualities, of, say, the American Revolution, are lost," when students read of such events only to develop such skills as outlining chapters of books, he said.

Mr. Laferte said that such criticism ignores a primary purpose of the system. "Basic skills are the first priority," he said. "You can't do the rest until you have the basic skills." He did admit, however, that the program places less emphasis on content than traditional systems.

He added that the progress of college-bound students should not be adversely affected by the program. "If a kid makes a decision to go to college we treat that like any other decision and we have to prepare him for college," he said.

While Mr. Laferte said he believes the program in its present form is helping many students, it will be slightly changed next year. "None of us want an identifiable career education grouping next year," he said.

Rather, more children will be taught using career education techniques, on a less structured basis. "We still have the same goals," he said. "Everybody thinks we have to have things like contracting. What we have to have is individualization."

Providence Journal March 4th 1974

N. Kingstown Citizens Unit Cites Goals

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J. Thomas Kidd, acting chairman of the group, said yesterday that members will question the effectiveness of the "career education" program, but also plan to work toward such goals as creation and maintenance of a school curriculum committee.

Mr. Kidd spoke at the organizational meeting of the group, attended by about 50 persons yesterday in the North Kingstown Free Library.

"We are nonpartisan, and we are not going to ax-grind, find fault or call names," Mr. Kidd said, adding that the group will gather the facts on such programs as the school system's controversial career education project.

In addition, the members are expected to monitor meetings of such school-related groups as the school committee, committees of administrators and the student council, offering their assistance when possible, he said.

Yesterday's meeting was divided between a presentation of the organization's goals and a series of complaints about the career education program, which is in effect in some of the town's schools.

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Members of the audience said that because of the lack of organization of the program, children are left to learn subjects by themselves, without benefit of a teacher's help.

NORTH KINGSTOWN, R.I. THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1974

Format changes, citizens' unit planned for schools

Changes in teaching format and the creation of a citizens advisory committee were promised by the North Kingstown School Committee this week in response to parental concern over the school system's career education program.

In addition, the school administration announced that a special testing program will be conducted at the Wickford Junior High School to check on the progress of students in career education versus those who are not.

The announcements came at the start of a three-hour discussion meeting Monday night on career education sponsored by the school committee and attended by about 100 parents, teachers, and a few students.

The lengthy discussion probed somewhat into the concepts and goals of the career education program and occasionally became hung up on definitions and semantics. But throughout, the mood was serious as parents questioned the implementation procedures of the program and administrators attempted to define, illustrate and defend the concepts and goals involved.

At the very outset, Burton Froberg, school superintendent, agreed that the department had blundered from the beginning for failing to set up a citizens' advisory committee on career education, which in design is supposed to be the vehicle for handling queries and problems between home and school, and to help guide the school committee in the implementation and evaluation aspects of the program.

As a result, the school committee this week issued an invitation to townspeople to nominate themselves for appointment to the committee. (see accompanying story).

During the discussion, it seemed apparent to school officials that the brunt of the

(Please turn to page 16)

Parents probe career education

(Continued from page 1)

criticism over the implementation of the program was being bourne by the Wickford Junior High School where there are three teams of teachers using career education.

Career education is also in operation at the Hamilton Elementary School, where differences from the regular teaching system are not so pronounced, and at the senior high school where implementation is also different.

A considerable number of parental complaints were over the emphasis on the so-called "contract" system. An integral part of career education at the junior high level, the system consists of each student and his teacher getting together to agree on a certain assignment.

For example, if a student decides to explore what is entailed in an electrician's career, he will consult with his teacher, who in turn will work out an assignment to be fulfilled. The student then "contracts" to perform the work related to electricity, to be graded upon completion.

Essentially, said administrators, the contract system is an assignment process which requires more initiative on the part of the students.

But, conceded Mr. Froberg, "perhaps the (contract system) pendulum has swung too much". As a result, the orders have been given to increase the amount of group instruction at the junior high level.

At present the school reserves Mondays for the more traditional group instruction in which a teacher addresses himself to a whole group of students at the same time. The contract system is regarded as individualized teaching.

The switch is apparently in response to some of the parental complaints that their children are not getting as much instruction in the basic subjects such as math, English, social studies and so on as they feel they should.

Career education is partly designed to weave the academic subjects into a career exploration format to make students aware of the relevancy of learning.

As in past meetings, parents questioned the emphasis on career education and wondered whether their children will be as prepared to enter college if they so desire as they would be under a traditional system.

From time to time, members of the audience delved into a report setting forth the career education program written by Orrin Laferte, program administrator.

A few parents wanted to know why Mr. Laferte took traditional teaching methods to task. What was wrong with going to school to learn information? they asked.

Mr. Laferte said his criticism was not aimed at gathering information but rather at gathering information for information's sake. The traditional rote memorization of facts has little or no carryover, he said.

Taking the Battle of Hastings, for example, he said he felt it was more important to understand the effects of the battle so that they can be related to other similar events and situations rather than the fact that the

date of the battle was 1066. In response, one parent offered the exact month and date of the battle.

George Sprague, director of instruction, said he felt it was important that students have the ability to make decisions and that is one of the purposes of career education. For example, students who want to go to vocational school have to be able to make up their minds by the ninth grade because that is when vocational schools start, he said.

Paul P. Johnson, a member of the school committee, said any discussion on educational method must come down to the "fundamental, difficult facts of (a student's) ability and willingness." Furthermore, he said, one of the most perplexing problems educators have to face is that there is no good means yet of assessing progress in school children.

While some career education teachers in the audience testified they had confidence in the system, others were critical.

One math teacher said he felt contract or teaching one individual at a time is inefficient. "I have no confidence in the contract system as a total way of learning," he said in a remark that won the only applause of the night.

Mrs. Kay Cutting, who has children in career education, said she has found teachers were being overwhelmed with handling contracts from students. She also said she was "aghast" to find out that students were being allowed to leave Wickford Junior High School during the school day to visit stores and businesses in Wickford to seek information for contract projects. Such field trips should have direct supervision or perhaps should be done as part of homework assignments, she said.

Mrs. Cutting also said she has found evidence of students who quickly finish their work being allowed to "listen to the radio or playing cards."

Another mother said she didn't want her child "wandering through town when she's supposed to be in school."

Other parents brought up the question of liability should a child be hurt while out of school. Mr. Froberg said he has checked with insurance personnel and found that the school insurance which costs $1.50 a year would cover injuries since the activity is considered school-related.

Only one parent praised career education, saying she had a child in junior high who was performing at a low level and hated school. Now in career education, the child is still performing at a low level but loves school. Noting that career education is only a half-year old, she said protesting parents are "not really giving the program a chance."

Howard L. Gardiner Jr., school committee chairman, said the citizens advisory committee should provide a forum for parents to register problems and suggestions. He said the school committee is also thinking of starting an advisory committee on curriculum as well.

No problem seen for program changes

Changes in the controversial Career Education program in some North Kingstown schools will not be prohibited by federal regulations guiding implementation of the federally-funded program.

In a visit to local schools by federal, state, and local school administrators this week, William Logan, regional director for the department of Health, Education, and Welfare, said the original federal grant application and the subsequent renewal application allow for many of the changes suggested in recent criticisms of the program.

In recent weeks, parents have shown concern that a citizens advisory unit had not been established to work with school administrators in implementing the program. The concern also centered around a "total delivery system" which would make the program mandatory for all students, the parents said.

Among those touring Career Education facilities at the high school and Wickford Junior High with Mr. Logan Tuesday were state Director of Education Dr. Fred G. Burke, Nelson Ashline, associate commissioner of education, and Matthew Cardoza, project officer for vocational education in HEW.

Dr. Burke said that although his visit to the career education program would have occurred sometime before the end of the year, he admitted that recent controversy over implementation of the program had made the issue more pressing.

Mr. Logan was part of a federal evaluation team that must review the program periodically according to the guidelines established in the grant. Both he and the program director in North Kingstown, Orrin Laferte, said yesterday that those guidelines and the grant renewal application both allow for changes which the Concerned Citizens for Education urged be made in a meeting with the school committee earlier this week.

Mr. Ashline said that a similar federally-funded program in East Providence, first started last year, has been termed a success by the city and the state. As a result, the program has gone system-wide in that city and will be picked up by local funds when the federal grant expires this year.

He added that in his opinion, the career education project in North Kingstown is as successful, or more so, than the one in East Providence. Mr. Laferte was responsible for original implementation of the program there last year.

Career Ed. defended

Dear Sir:

This letter is concerned with the Career Education Program. We're students from Wickford Junior High School Career Education Program, and we feel we're being misrepresented.

We feel we should have our say about this program. The students' parents seem to oppose this program when they really don't know anything about it. How can parents judge how much we're learning?

The parents that had the traditional system of schooling think that they benefited more than we are benefiting from Career Education. We feel that we learn the basic skills plus career information. Because this is a new program, parents are knocking it. They should give it a fair chance.

Almost three-fourths of the school year has gone by so why do they decide to change it now? We're not going to benefit at all if they keep changing it. We feel we are mature and old enough to walk to Wickford without a babysitter.

If we're not old enough by the eighth grade we'll never be. We'll never accomplish anything if we're not given a chance. We would like to have a debate and voice "our" opinion on the Career Education Program against the higher voicing parents. They seem to think they know more about this program than the students that are experiencing it.

The parents see this program and don't know how it really is!

Sue Fiedler
Heidi Allen
Dawn Marcus
Cathy Glawson
Dawn Douglass
Peter Frazier

'Ignorance biggest enemy'

Dear Sir:

Our group (Young Citizens for Career Education) feels that Career Education has been knocked around enough, that it now should be defended.

We have undertaken the responsibility of defending what we beleive in, in this case Career Education. Our group is planning to place posters in Wickford, to attend all town meetings pertaining to Career Education to defend it, and to make the public aware of the advantages of Career Education.

A small group of parents called Citizens for Education has resulted in many problems. One example of this is the termination of our unsupervised field trips, and because of this action we cannot go into Wickford alone to gain information for our projects as in the past. Going into Wickford has been a great help to us, as is apparent by our contracts. In fact one of our members requested to go to your newspaper office to buy some back copies for a project of his, and another wanted to go to the town library to get some information about ballistics. Both were denied because of the severe action taken by the Citizens for Education.

They also claim that we are not getting enough of the basic skills such as English, math, science, social studies. We are, with a small exception. Now we do it for a purpose. For the first time in our lives we have been able to do work that is pertinent to our future.

Another charge that they made is that we are not getting enough guidance in our basic classes, but these claims are unsupported. We are getting guidance when we need it and every Monday we get even more guidance in our regular classes.

Ignorance is the biggest enemy of Career Education. We do admit that there were bad public relations from the start, and because of the bad public relations, people did not understand the inner workings of Career Education.

Debbie Allen
Kim Alsfeld
Brenda Silva
Lynnwood Southwick
Ricky Hedenberg
David Giramma

82/83

Career Ed. activities are covered

The North Kingstown School Department has been assured that low-cost, school-time accident insurance used by students does cover students when they are out of school on a career education project.

At a meeting last week on career education, some parents wondered about liability in cases of accidents to children who are out of school during a career education project.

In a letter to Burton Froberg, school superintendent J. David Derosier, president of the Derosier Plan Administrators Inc., agents for the student school insurance program, said the firm will consider the career education project "as covered within the scope of the school-time accident insurance. Should the project blossom into a large-scale program, we reserve the right to review the risk and hazard involved."

The insurance costs $1.50 a year per student.

The public should attend

Dear Sir:

Having recently attended several school committee meetings, career education discussions, and other meetings concerning North Kingstown education, I feel that there is an important point to be brought out.

This concerns the school committee. In introducing a new curriculum they are striving to improve our children's education. I feel it is unfortunate that all the criticism comes now, after the fact. I think parents, not only this small group of critics, but all parents should take a look at themselves and ask where they were when this career education was proposed.

The school committee meetings, for instance, are very poorly attended. They are public meetings and the "public" is generally 2-3 people. I hope that the current concern over career education is only the beginning of a new awareness and support on the part of parents for North Kingstown schools.

Jean D. Foster
North Kingstown

Voice of 'a middle-aged square'

Dear Sir:

May I comment on the meeting of March 4, involving the school board, the school administrators and parents? A good deal of the conversation revolved around "awareness" and "decision-making." As a parent I agree . . . I would like to become more aware of what is actually going on in our schools and I would like to become more involved in the decision-making when it comes to what kind of an education my children will have and how it will be taught. From the lack of knowledge—you should pardon the expression—that many of the parents seemed to have about the current methods being used in the North Kingstown schools, it would appear the school department is being run on an "education without representation" basis as far as parents are concerned.

A good share of the meeting concerned itself with career education - why it was introduced, how it is applied and the results it aims to achieve. The more I listened the more I realized I have been using the career education concept in my own home with my children, so I feel I can speak from experience. For instance here are some examples — not necessarily in the sequence in which they were introduced.

We have exposed our children to the career of animal husbandry. First we determined if both of them were "interested" and "willing." They were. We acquired a dog, two cats, one parakeet, two gerbils and a rabbit. The children were to feed, groom and generally take care of these animals. Result: Animals — great . . . Husbandry — not so great.

When the children left the swaddling and toddling stage and entered the running around stage, we moved to the suburbs in order to have a home with a yard, green grass, trees, gardens, etc. We then attempted to introduce our children to the possibilities of landscape gardening. We started with the simple things — raking leaves and weeding. Once again the children were most willing and interested in the landscape part of the deal but they weren't particularly wild about the gardening part.

In the area of Home Economics and Maintenance Engineering, the result was the same. As they grew a bit older they expressed great interest and willingness to have their own rooms. As far as the economics go, it is a known fact among parents that when child leaves a room everything that can be turned on is turned on — and left on. Maintenance is what parents do after they give up trying to get the kids to do it.

I am certain that many other parents have carried out similar experiments in career education. And I suspect that knowing how they turn out . . . if the follow-through is not subject to strict supervision . . . is why many are concerned. Career education, where children are allowed to select what they want to do, make a decision about what they are more interested in and more willing to do, must be followed by close supervision to make certain the selection of "what" is supported by "how" and "why" and "when."

Perhaps it is time to stop seeking some exotic and unproven method of teaching which avoids treating Children like Children. This is one parent who still believes that those small humans you see in grade and high school are not little adults — they are children and should be treated as such.

I personally would like to see less "individualization" and more supervision — less accent on decision-making and more decision responsibility — more strong direction and less self-guidance — more respect for proven traditions and less willingness to embrace the latest fad—more discipline and less indulgence and ABOVE ALL more control over the activities of the children while they are in school and away from parental influence.

It is not necessary to abandon the idea of career education as a device to make learning more acceptable. We haven't. We still have the dog, cats, gerbils, parakeet and rabbit, and the house still rings with those time-honored phrases "Come back here — you didn't feed the cats, clean the bird, walk the dog, pick up your room," etc., etc.

It might just be possible to blend some old fashioned teaching methods with brand new direction and arrive at an overall superior style of education.

Your friendly, neighborhood
middle-aged square

Lee Beckwith

North Kingstown

Students defend Career Ed.

Angered, they strike back

By MARCEL DUFRESNE

"They acted responsibly and they got shafted."

That statement by a Career Education teacher at Wickford Junior High sums up the feelings of a group of students at the school who are unhappy with recent developments in the program, most notably the termination of all unsupervised field trips by the school committee.

The field trips, which allowed students to venture into the general Wickford area to collect information and interview persons in various professions, were ordered stopped by the administration two weeks ago as the result of parental complaints to the school committee.

The students, numbering 13 at last count and all in the Career Ed program, are angry with that move and at what they feel is a general lack of understanding of the program by parents and the school committee.

Last week they organized into the Young Citizens for Career Education and hope to get their message across through a poster campaign and a debate — if they can get someone from the opposition to respond.

The opposition, as they see it, is made up of parents and more particularly, the newly-formed Citizens for Education, who the students feel were instrumental in getting the field trips terminated.

The field trip issue is a sore one for the students since it was the part of Career Education they enjoyed the most, felt they were getting the most from educationally, and which was the most easily done away with by parental pressure.

"I don't see why they don't take their kids out if they don't like it, and let it be," said Susan Fiedler, one of the more vocal members of the group. "It's like they're putting us on a leash so we can go just so far and that's it."

The group was also concerned about where the school committee was getting its information in making decisions about the program's future.

"You think they'd ask us about the program because we're really the only ones who know about it," said Peter Frazier. "But they haven't. They've only asked those against it, and not us because we're for it."

Likewise they were upset that complaints from parents were based on information gotten from their children, many of whom either were not in the program or who probably could not function under any educational system.

"Some of the kids were out bragging that they were doing nothing, so the parents complained," said Dawn Marcus.

And in many cases, the students said, "kids who weren't in Career Ed were jealous of the free time we were getting."

But overall, the group feels that they did not abuse the unsupervised trips as many parents had led the school committee to believe.

"No one's going off and hitching to the beach or anything," said Kim Alsfeld and "if they did, then I think they probably should cut the trips out."

Among the type of information sources visited by students were the library, the police station, the high school, a local pharmacy, and the town hall. Comments from persons at those places seem to back up the students' claim that the privilege was not abused.

Capt. Thomas Hazel of the North Kingstown Police Department said the students were frequent visitors to the station and that he had been impressed.

"Well, they sure weren't fooling

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around," said the captain. "I found them to be very business-minded and interested. They seemed to be putting their hearts into it."

Personnel at the North Kingstown Free Library echoed that sentiment.

"Many were enthusiastic to find that we had some information about careers," said Russell Reed. "The ones who came in were motivated and interested in what we were able to offer."

"They all seemed very serious," added Mrs. Regina Leeper.

The only possibly-negative comment was from Raymond Durand, a pharmacist at Earnshaw's Drugs on Brown Street.

Having been visited by two students on one occasion, he said, "My honest impression was that they thought it was a joke but it might just have been nervousness. It was rather brief and they really didn't have time to relax," he added.

The termination of these field trips has not only hurt the students. Miss Alsfeld, whose interests lie in large part

"Parents who are for it aren't speaking out like the others are. They seem to be afraid or embarrassed." — Dawn Douglass

in social work, was distressed with the result on a project she was involved in.

She and several other students, interested in becoming social workers, had planned to take a group of young children from a local adoption agency on a picnic to Roger Williams Park in Providence. The trip has now been cancelled, she noted sadly.

The students were also highly critical of the fact that school committee members did not seem to know much about the program before they accepted it last year. They cited recent comments by critical parents saying many or all of the school committee members had not read the federal career education grant application before they endorsed it.

And likewise, they criticized the committee for making changes in the

"I don't see why they don't take their kids out if they don't like it and let it be." — Susan Fiedler.

middle of the school year on the basis of parental complaints and not on how the program was actually working.

"Changing in the third quarter has made it confusing for everyone and cut down it's effectiveness," said David Giramma. "And it also makes it hard to adjust."

"They should know what they are accepting before they change things around," added Heidi Allen. "It just hasn't been given a fair chance."

As a whole, the group appeared enthusiastic about Career Education. When talking about the more traditional type of classroom instruction, however, words like "boring", "a drag" and "useless" were often used.

While much of parental concern has centered around the notion students in Career Education weren't getting

enough instruction in the basic skills to get into college, all indicated they wish to go on to college and that they are indeed getting the required skills.

In the same vein, they all agreed that by working at a less structured pace, basically their own, they were in fact passing in more work in a shorter period of time. This they attributed to the much maligned "contract" system.

Under this method, which many teachers agreed has been used long before career education was instituted, each student enters into an agreement with the teacher on what work will be done and in what period of time.

"It's a good way to make us learn things and it makes you feel important," said Miss Allen.

Dawn Douglass, for one, complained about being in the program at first because she thought she was not learning those basic skills. But she has since changed her mind, as several others said they had.

She added that "parents who are for it aren't speaking out like the others

"My parents hated it at the beginning but I've been able to convince them." — Lynwood Southwick

are. They seem to be afraid or embarrassed."

Lynnwood Southwick said his parents "hated it at the beginning," but that he's been able to convince them and they now support it.

Several others said their parents don't seem to care one way or another.

One problem career education students are having is that parents do not see them doing any homework, they said.

"They think school is homework and because we don't have any they think we're not doing anything," said Miss Allen. "They don't understand that it's done while we're in school."

The students believe that a recent decision by the administration to gradually work students back into groups in the classroom instead of allowing them to work on their own is a

"No one's going off and hitching to the beach or anything." — Kim Alsfeld

political move designed to "get the parents off their backs."

"They're doing it to please the parents and make it more visible," said young Frazier.

There is, however, one point on which the students are in agreement with those parents who have complained about the program. They agree that Career Education should not be implemented throughout the whole school system, as is currently planned over the next two years.

"The kids who can't handle responsibility would probably take advantage of it and spoil it for the others," warned Miss Fiedler. If students are forced into Career Education, she said, it would be equivalent to the rigid structure of the old system and "they'll complain and won't learn anything anyway."

Career Ed., curriculum advisory groups named

A Career Education Advisory Committee was formed this week with the appointment of 21 members by the North Kingstown School Committee.

Another 25 persons were also selected to serve on the newly-formed Curriculum Advisory Committee.

The School Administration announced three weeks ago that it would create the Career Education group, and indicated that it was thinking of forming a curriculum advisory unit. At that time, Supt. Burton Froberg, in the wake of parental criticism, agreed that the school department had blundered earlier in the year by failing to set up an advisory group for the Career Education program.

Last month, Orrin Laferte and William Dimick of the Career Education department met with a group of volunteers to form an advisory unit. While six persons expressed interest in the idea, no other meeting was ever called, and the group never began its work.

This week, Mr. Froberg stated that the appointments to the committees represent a cross-section of the town and that the groups "are fully representative."

He and George Sprague, director of instruction, will serve as non-voting members of both committees. Orrin Laferte, director of the Career Education program, will also serve on that group, and Patricia Alger, assistant director for curriculum, will serve on the curriculum committee.

For the most part, the Career Education committee is composed of local citizens with non-education backgrounds. A high school student and a North Kingstown Jr. High teacher will serve on the unit along with Edward Wilcox, Jamestown School superintendent.

The curriculum committee is made up of 8 North Kingstown

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(Continued from page 1)

school faculty members and two students, with the rest of the members coming from varied backgrounds.

In a letter to the Career Education committee, Mr. Froberg said the purpose of the group "is to achieve cooperation among all of those segments of the community that is essential to the sound implementation of the program." He said the committee will advise the school administration, students and the community about needs and future plans for Career Education.

Mr. Froberg told the curriculum group that their task would be to review the North Kingstown educational philosophy and goals, review present curriculum, and advise the school committee about new curriculum that is being considered.

The Career Education group will first meet Wednesday, and the curriculum committee the following night. Both groups will select their own officers.

Appointed to the Career Education unit were: Nancy Armstrong, 82 Elmwood Dr.; James Baker, 11 Lexington Ave.; Robert Cabelli, 130 Peachtree Dr.; Violet Clark, 71 Haverhill Ave.; Andrew W. DeTorra, 138 Sauga Ave.; William Dean, 126 Sachem Rd.; Jean D. Foster, 24 Whitman Ave.; John Jennings, Lantern Lane, Exeter; Elaine Johnston, 30 Dean Ave. and David Camp, 520 Annaquatucket Rd.

Also named were: James Lynch, 81 Peachtree Dr.; Robert McCann, 75 Lantern Lane; Paul Morrisey, 31 Concord Ave.; William Mudge, Old Baptist Rd.; Martha Parks, Hammond Hill Rd.; Stephen A. Pierce, 195 Brookhaven Rd.; Charles Schmidt, Jr., 57 Ann Lane; Fred Seymour, 154 West Main St.; Patricia Smith, 250 Prospect St.; Richard Sundburg, 88 Lantern Lane; and Edward Wilcox, Jamestown school superintendent.

Named to the Curriculum Advisory Committee were: Janice Burns, 139 Duck Cove Rd.; Rose Bradley, 64 Burlingame Rd., West Warwick; Bertil Brodin, Pierce Ave., Jamestown; Richard Burda, 35 Harrington Rd.; Jan Cabeza, 299 School ST.; Christian H. Cherau, 27 Lawton Ave.; Charles Daniel, Main St.; and Mary F. Davis, 54 Church Lane.

Also appointed were: Paul Ederheimer, 845 Old Baptist Rd.; Charles Jones, 220 Haverhill Ave.; Michael R. Ferrance, 342 West Allenton Rd.; Joan Frazier, Forrestal Ave.; Doris Ferry, 216 Haverhill Ave.; Dr. Warren Hagist, 191 Slocum Rd.; Mary Lou Hawkinsen, 5 Virginia Ave., East Greenwich; Nancy Kidd, 21 Edgar Nock Rd.; Mrs. G. Dickson Kenney, 415 Fletcher Rd.; and Floyd Lehnertz, 147 Haverhill Rd.

Others named were: Dolores Lukens, 74 West Main St., Leo Maynard, 46 Woodhaven; Jennette A. Thomas, 49 Gardiner Ave.; James Thomson Jr., 143 Forrestal Ave.; Gordon Udall, 44 Edgar Nock Rd.; James Van West, 90 Carriage Hill Rd.; and Richard Zinser, Columbia Ave., Jamestown.

The Standard Times - March 21, 1974

9/19/92

'We are for education'

Dear Sir:

As a member of Citizens for Education, I thank you for printing the two letters in last week's paper from the 12 students in the Career Education program at Wickford Junior High School. The students and their teachers are to be congratulated, because certainly one of the finest educaional experiences a student can have is to participate in a constructive way in the making of his own future.

CFE is not opposed to Career Education, although that seems to have been the catalyst which brought us into existence. Our concern over the program came from four sources.

First, a considerable number of parents had raised serious questions as to whether their children in Career Education were receiving a "good" education.

Second, the application for federal funding for the program was rather frightening in terms of untested and logically unsound educational concepts.

Third, it appeared that the program was being hastily rushed into the school system without the public really knowing what was going on.

Fourth, the stated plan was to place all students and teachers in the program, when many teachers and students preferred to remain in a more "traditional" program.

It seems to be a real weakness of human nature that the moment an organization forms it becomes an oasis for complainers and gains a reputation for being against things. CFE wants every student in the school system to have the best education possible. Any techniques that can accomplish this goal are good techniques. No two people are alike, and no single educational system is best for everybody.

The initial over-reaction to Career Education was distressing to us because we felt that we had possibly started it, and that, as several of our members phrased it, the baby might go down the drain with the bathwater. We want a Career Education program for those students who will prosper within it; but we also want this to be the best

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'We are for education'

(Continued from page 4)

Career Education program possible.

As our name states, we are *for* education. Those who read this letter and who have some concern over their or their children's education can do something beside brood about it in front of the TV set. The school committee is establishing two committees for community involvement in both Career Education and curriculum. Contact Mr. Froberg, the school Superintendent, and tell him of your interest. Try one of our meetings, but come with a constructive helpful attitude and leave your gripes at home.

I have written a letter similar in content to this one to the 12 students referred to above, and we hope to work together with them, their teachers and their parents.

David S. Camp
North Kingstown

The-Standard-Time
April 4, 1974

Communication lack aired at student, parent panel

Two groups concerned with North Kingstown's Career Education Program, one made up of parents and the other of students in the program, got together this week and discovered their basic problem was one of communication.

The groups, Citizens for Education, an organization of parents formed recently to monitor the school system, and Young Citizens for Career Education, which formed last month as a reaction to administrative changes in their program, met for a panel discussion this week. The meeting, before about 40 parents and teachers, was organized mainly as an informational session so each side could find out where the other stood on various issues dealing with Career Education and so each could learn from the other, said David Camp, moderator.

The major item of contention was the recent cancellation of unsupervised field trips for Career Education students by the school administration. Members of the Young Citizens, all of whom attend Wickford Junior High School, had previously criticized the CFE because they felt the parent group had played an instrumental part in the cancellation of the trips.

Each group questioned the

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The Standard-Times 4/4/74

Communication lack aired at student, parent panel

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other's role in the trips; the students wanted to know what role, if any, the parents played in the trip cancellation and the parents wished to find out what value the students thought the trips had.

Mrs. Nancy Kidd, of CFE, told the students that a notification of the cancellation had been made by the administration on the morning before a CFE meeting with the school committee. She said the parents group had taken no stand on the unsupervised trips, which allowed students to venture into the general Wickford area to do research for their studies on careers.

Another CFE panel member, Gordon Udall, said although the group had not actively sought the termination of the field trips, it would also not make recommendations as to their reinstatement until more research was done and more facts were presented on their structure and value.

Mr. Udall said CFE was formed because parents felt they were getting "education without representation," and that individual parents had little chance of making changes in the large and impersonal North Kingstown School system. He added that the group would be looking into other areas of the town's school system besides Career Education with the hopeful end result being a better overall system for the student.

The field trips, which made up a large part of the Career Education program at the junior high level, were defended by the students. They frequently mentioned that the trips gave them a feeling of independence and taught them responsibility, both for their time and the work expected of them.

They also explained the "contract" system which teachers at the junior high use in their implementation of Career Education there. The students meet as a group in the early morning they said, and later meet with teachers on an individual basis to outline what area of study they will undertake for a particular contract and what work is expected of them.

David Giramma, a student, explained that a student can have as many as 25 contracts throughout the year, but admitted that it is possible for unmotivated students to keep working in the same area, whether it be social science, math, or science, without changing to another area. He himself has had three different concentrations, he said.

If the contracts are not fulfilled on schedule, he explained the student has two options. Students can get an extension if they notify the teacher ahead of time and if they have a very good, "and it must be very good," reason, he said. Or, he continued, they can settle for a lower grade. The grade goes down the later the contract is completed, he added.

Mrs. Kidd said the program could shortchange a majority of students if "it's limited to just 10 or 15 clusters," a cluster being one profession or area of vocation such as medicine, communications, or social services.

Mrs. Maggie Jones added that Career Education was not a new concept; that vocational and internship training had been in existence for hundreds of years. But that type of training could be "too narrowing" she said, indicating that Career Education was not necessarily beneficial to every student.

Both groups agreed that the Career Education program should not be implemented throughout the whole school system and that students should be given several options as to their educational program. They were also in agreement that students who abuse the free time afforded them in Career Education should be taken out of the program.

Students again noted that the value of the program lies in the amount of responsibility each student is given. The independence allowed them, they said, permitted each student to work at his or her own speed, which, they added, resulted in the majority of them turning in better work in a shorter period of time.

They also cited the excitement of learning about the various types of careers available in the outside world, something they often learned little about in the more traditional forms of education.

Mr. Udall told the students, however, that the more traditional method of education was valuable as a matter of "self discipline." Throughout life, he said, people have to "learn to take orders and do what the boss tells you."

David Giramma said he felt many parents think Career Education is like vocational training. But, he explained, they are quite different. Career Education, he said tries to make a student aware of what is available whereas vocational education trains students for particular fields.

The Providence Journal
April 10, 1974

Career Education Grant Renewed for N. Kingstown

The Department of Health Education and Welfare has notified North Kingstown that it will renew the town's career education grant, totaling $111,000 for the coming school year.

The controversial program, which is funded for three years in separate annual grants, began last September.

In response to the controversy, the school committee has appointed a career education advisory committee which is already meeting and which will make recommendations to the school committee on how the program should be changed.

At its meeting this week, the school committee announced it would place the career education program on its June business meeting agenda to act on recommendations of the advisory group.

The school committee also approved the 1974-1975 school calendar, which includes a two-week vacation at Christmas, instead of the usual one week.

The energy crisis prompted state education officials and the state's superintendents to recommend that the schools reopen the Monday after New Year's Day instead of the usual day after the holiday. It adds two more days vacation next year, which will be added to the end of the year. School will close June 20.

School committee delays career education renewal

Although the North Kingstown school administration has been told that funds will be available for the Career Education program next year, at least some school committee members want more information before they approve the program for a second year.

Federal funding for the program starts July 1, and committeeman Robert E. Richardson Jr. said this week that he wants the school committee to decide before then if the program should continue.

He said that the committee has received complaints about the planning, organization, and implementation of the program. "I think it's been atrocious", he continued, and said the committee should receive some indication that it will improve next year before it is reapproved.

Committeeman Paul P. Johnson, said he wanted to see the results of tests which have been recently conducted among Career Education students. He said that if the test scores are negative, the school committee should reconsider the program.

"I don't think we should gamble (with the program) if they're not getting reading, writing and arithmetic," he said.

John McGinn, director of pupil personnel said test scores will be available, but that they may not be valid because of the short time period since the students were tested in November. A second test was given in March.

Burton Froberg, superintendent, told the committee they would have to decide before the July funding date, and it was informally decided to reconsider the matter at the committee's June business meeting.

The Standard-Times
6/13/74

Career Ed. gets nod but with stipulations

Career Education should continue in North Kingstown with modifications, the first report of the Career Education Advisory Committee has concluded.

In its report to the school committee, the advisory group said that it will suggest modifications as the program goes on. They also released a list of findings and a number of specific recommendations for the controversial Career Education Program.

The report was written by Orrin Laferte, the director of the program, who originally served as temporary chairman of the advisory group and then as temporary secretary.

It was then approved for accuracy by committee members in a telephone vote conducted by committee members Patricia Smith and Martha Parks, according to Mr. Laferte.

As in other discussions of the program, the advisory committee concluded that communication and understanding

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Career Ed. gets nod

(Continued from page 1)

of the Career Education Program has been faulty.

In its recommendations, which were approved at the advisory group's regular meetings, the committee suggested 11 specific changes. Among the recommendations were more specific learning objectives, better public relations, a 20-1 teacher-pupil ratio, teacher workshops and team-teaching at the high school.

The committee also approved a recommendation by David Camp that proposed that the program be expanded when "the exact nature and scope of career education objectives and optional methods of reaching them is planned on the basis of information and ideas provided by teachers, citizens, students, administrators, and precedents set by other Career Education Programs."

He also proposed that the plan be coordinated with any curriculum that is in effect, and that the description of the program be made available to the public, according to committee records.

The findings listed in the report were written by Mr. Laferte, who said he gathered them from committee reports and from what was said at committee meetings.

The findings included two concerned with the lack of communication within the program. Others concluded that the administrators had failed to come up with specific learning objectives, and that the initial group of students in the program were not representative and thus this year's program "was not a fair test of the program's values."

The report released this week also included a budget for next year's program, which was prepared by Mr. Laferte and approved by the adivsory committee.

According to the minutes of the committee, the group has held four meetings. At one point in the proceedings, the group considered just reporting to the school committee that it approved of continuing Career Education with modifications. However, according to the minutes, Mr. Laferte said that the school committee wanted more specific information.

The Career Education Advisory Committee was formed by the school committee in March to advise the administrators of the Career Education Program.

'Is Laferte objective?'

Dear Sir:

In reference to the articles in the June 13 Standard-Times regarding the recommendations of the Career Education Advisory Council, as compiled by Orrin Laferte, several questions arise.

One wonders if Mr. Laferte, who was the Director of Career Education this past year, should have had such a key role on the council in developing recommendations, whether he has been objective in analyzing its past shortcomings, and whether he can be successful in implementing the changes which are advocated.

A better public relations program and more specific learning objectives are sited as being part of 11 changes. Yet this week parents of students who are to attend Wickford Junior High in the fall were asked to decide whether they would grant permission for their children to be placed in the Career Study Group. How can these parents make a valid judgement of a program knowing only that it will be changed and having no specifics available as to its objectives, content, or structure?

The recommendations of an advisory council are a worthy pursuit but useless without decisive leadership and speedy implementation. Parents and all taxpayers have the right to know exactly how Career Education will be taught in the North Kingstown School System this September. Many of us care and would like the program to become a useful educational method in our schools.

Mrs. Robert Kingman
North Kingstown

Communication needed

Dear Sir:

Last week's Standard-Times carried an article concerning the continuation of Career Education in the North Kingstown schools. I am unable to understand why Orrin Laferte, director of the Career Ed Program, would have been allowed to write the Advisory Committee report to the school committee. In as much as he is not an officer of the Advisory Committee, I feel his only function in that group should have been to explain the workings of the program as it occured in the schools this year. Lack of communication and understanding? Yes, indeed!

The original proposal on Career Ed called for the formation of an advisory committee from the beginning. Now that we have the committee, is this same group of 20 people to continue to advise for the coming year?

Advice, communication and understanding are badly needed to make this program work for the benefit of our children.

Beverly Timpf
North Kingstown

The Standard-Times, Thursday, June 20, 1974

'Laferte advised the advisors'

Dear Sir:

The American Heritage Dictionary defines advice as "Opinion from one not concerned as to what could or should be done about a problem," and I have always assumed that the purpose of an advisory council was to give advice. Since Orrin Laferte is very much concerned with the career education program, it seems very strange to me that he should have been a vocal participant in the deliberations of the Career Education Advisory Council, and above all to have been the one to write its recommendation to be presented to the school committee.

In spite of the fact that an advisory council is called for in the requirements for the federal grant, Mr. Laferte was extremely reluctant to form one. It was only when extreme public pressure was brought to bear that the present council was formed. One wonders at his reluctance, since he seems to have this council in the hollow of his hand. I must question the competency of the advisory council, and the validity of its report, since its recommendations were written by the director of this highly controversial program.

Instead of advising his own advisory council, Mr. Laferte might well have spent his time writing a letter to the parents of the Wickford Junior High School students, outlining in detail the course of study for the career education program in that school next year. Parents of these students are being asked to decide now whether or not they want their children in the program next year, and have nothing more upon which to base their decision than a highly ambiguous and very misleading paragraph. If this is the way the career education program is being handled, perhaps we should give the government back its money and return to a more traditional, more competently run program for the students of North Kingstown.

Polly S. Udall
North Kingstown

THE STANDARD - TIMES

A Page of Opinion

Talk plain

Several months ago, the Career Education program, whose basic concept we have applauded before, ran into a considerable amount of flak from parents who felt their youngsters enrolled in the program were getting shortchanged in the more traditional academic subjects.

They feared that without proper foundation, their children might not be able to meet future educational standards. They also felt that for many students, too much career orientation might not keep open the avenue of further education.

The concerns, all legitimate, resulted in a series of meetings with school authorities. The parents drove home the message that they were not happy with the situation and what's more they did not fully understand the program. Both sides agreed that one of the earliest goals of the program — establishing a working, active, relationship with the community and homes of the children — had not been accomplished. In other cliche terms, there was a severe lack of communications.

The immediate reaction was to form the mechanisms which had been overlooked. One result was the career education advisory committee. The group has been active but we're beginning to wonder whether improved communications has been served.

For example, a recent news release issued by the committee states that the group met with school officials "to clarify questions concerning the integration of the career education concept into the curriculum of the coming year. It was made clear that it would be used as a means of motivating the children to acquire skills needed to attain objectives of the curriculum."

Further on in the release the committee said one of its recommendations "was that more specific learning objectives must be formulated at each level so that a systematic sequential development of academic, career awareness, self awareness and exploration skills can take place."

Now, we have resigned ourselves to the fact that life isn't as simple as it once was and this includes the field of education which perhaps must become complex as it tries to prepare youngsters to cope with a complex world.

But often it seems that educators defeat themselves. Seemingly, they become enraptured in the jargon phrase of the month. That's all right over convention tables and at seminars but when educators are dealing with the public that pays the bills, they should have enough common sense and ability to speak plainly.

Educationalese, in some quarters, has become somewhat of a joke. Everyone is guilty at times, of stating something in an unnecessarily complex manner but for educators, who by definition are professionals, the habit appears widespread.

One of the purposes of the advisory committee, as we understood it, was to foster better communications between the school system and the homes of North Kingstown. In support of that goal, we strongly suggest that news releases or even verbal discussions spiked with jargon and educationalese that border on gobbledygook be avoided and relegated to doctoral theses. In short, talk plain.

The Standard-Times - Thursday 8/1/74

On syntaxical confabulations

Dear Sir:

With the cost of newsprint at $248 per ton I would think you could find better ways of spending it than editorializing over news releases that you decide not to use. I think you are very patronizing when you suggest that your readers could not understand the sentence, "The Committee had asked to meet with the administration in order to clarify questions concerning the integration of the career education concept into the curriculum for the coming year." I don't find any of those words very difficult to understand. What about the next sentence? "It was made clear that it would be used as a means of motivating the children to attain objectives of the curriculum." Seems clear enough. I think motivation, objectives and curriculum are perfectly good words to use when writing about education.

How about the next to last sentence in your editorial. "In support of that goal, we strongly suggest that news releases or even verbal discussion spiked with jargon and educationalese that border on gobbledygook be avoided and relegated to doctoral theses." Wow! I can't even find the word "educationalese" in my copy of The American Heritage Dictionary.

Okay, so there is a lot of jargon in the social sciences and the field of education is one of the worst offenders. This is probably because educators are trying to make the field more scientific which means precise in the use of terms for specific phenomena.

But I am really teed off that you come down so hard on such a minor aspect of the career education advisory committee's efforts. These people are devoting a great deal of time to this and they are not being paid large salaries as are the administrators of the program. Very recently I have taken time from my work to take care of our children so that my wife could attend a career education workshop. Members of the committee were not reimbursed for this nor do they expect to be. But that doesn't mean I am willing to sit at home reading the Standard-Times while you write such ridiculous editorials. Why don t you get out and find out what is actually going on in our school department. Ask some hard questions and do a little investigative reporting. Ask Burt Froburg who he has hired to fill the two new learning disability teaching positions authorized by the financial town meeting. Put some questions to the candidates for the School Committee.

A local newspaper should, in my humble opinion, try to help the community to improve itself. You can do a lot more by writing about career education that by criticizing the hournalistic style of its press releases. At least you might have called the person who gave it to you and suggested some clarification. That would have been one small positive contribution, and a way of helping the dedicated people on the advisory committee to do a better job.

Howard H. Foster, Jr.
North Kingstown

Thursday, Aug. 1, 1974

'With friends like you...'

Dear Sir:

As a member of the Career Education Advisory Committee, I would like to take issue with your July 25, "Talk Plain" editorial. In this editorial you accuse the Committee of using "jargon" unfamiliar to the community. Your newspaper was given a statement after our last committee meeting telling about the current plans for Career Education and how these plans were going to be implemented. Out of this statement you chose to build an editorial around two incomplete sentences. You neglected to mention that Teacher Workshops were being held to develop specific objectives for Career Education and that the Committee would subsequently review these objectives. Prior to this you gave no coverage to the findings of the Ad Hoc Committee which had been set up to work out the differences between the School committee, the Administration, Citizens for Education Advisory Committee and the Curriculum Committee.

You criticize the words that we use. Supposedly an editorial page is read by those willing to give some thought to what they are reading. I always find sentences taken out of context hard to understand but, perhaps, the Committee quotes you used make more sense to the reader than such words as "gobbledygook" and "educationalese."

I would also like to clear up a misconception you seem to have. The Career Education Advisory Committee is made up of 21 people, four of whom list their occupations as educators. We were appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee to be an advisory committee. We are trying to accept our responsibility as we understand it. If the concepts of Career Education are to be implemented successfully the support of the community is absolutely necessary. It is difficult to get such support with this kind of newspaper coverage.

Martha Parks

'Talk plain' was plain talk

Dear Sir:

Your latest editorial, "Talk Plain", is a good one. It points out one of the glaring flaws in the thinking and action of most of the Career Education Advisory Committee. Membership on that committee is a public trust. We citizens should expect to receive meaningful statements from its membership.

The quotations from the committee's reports that you published show us that those reports are most-often written by the director of career education—the person the committee is supposed to be monitoring. The committee is supposed to ask hard questions, demand and receive clearly understandable answers, and then advise the administrator of the citizens' desires, needs, and opinions in light of those answers. All actions are to be done "in public", in meetings well-publicized in advance so that the public may attend. All questions, answers, and advice should be provided to the public through published minutes and reports written by the committee secretary.

When the work of the committee is reported to us in "Educationalese" by the director of career education, we learn nothing. It is time for the committee to start fulfilling its public trust: to provide us with plain writing and plain talk. I hope you will continue to prod the committee into doing its duty.

J. Thomas Kidd
President, Citizens for Education
North Kingstown

The Standard Times - Aug 23, 1974

Dislikes 'personal conversations'

Dear Sir:

Do you think your newspaper should be used for personal attacks? Mr. Ederheimer's letter was more vicious than Mr. Foster's.

Besides, Mr. Foster's letter was talking about career education - a topic this community is much concerned about. Mr. Foster's and Mrs. Parks' letters told us more about career education than your paper. The workshops and the committee meetings are certainly steps in the right direction. The people on the advisory committee are just laymen, like most of us. They are giving their time and are trying to gain experience. I think they should be commended.

Apparently the committee gave the paper an article. Couldn't it have been printed so the reader could form his own opinion?! A newspaper is supposed to inform the public. Their article is, of course, no longer newsworthy, but hopefully we will have some news from the committee itself soon.

As for Mr. Ederheimer, I don't think he needed to air his apparent dislike for Mr. Foster before the public. How about using the telephone for our personal conversations, Mr. E?

Katherine L. Smith
Wickford

Schools open Wednesday

Enrollment drop seen

Schools will open next Wednesday in North Kingstown, much to the chagrin of legions of youngsters who have been leading lives of ease and freedom during the summer months.

Burton Froberg, superintendent, said the school department anticipates an enrollment of about 6,000 school children next week, or about 1,200 less than last year.

While the children enjoyed the long dry summer, school officials have grappled with the effects of a lower pupil population, caused by the Navy's Quonset pullout.

One of the main results of the anticipated drop in students is a smaller teaching staff. At one point, over 40 teachers were suspended, but most have been reinstated. (a story on the suspended teacher situation appears elsewhere in this issue).

But school children can expect most other things to be the same when they march and shuffle into their schools this year.

Two major changes are that the old Allenton school has been put into retirement and the Quonset school has been closed for the time being because of the Navy pullout.

The school department is in the process of re-evaluating its controversial career education program, and a modified version of the program will continue this year.

For now, the department will continue its job placement program at the high school, and the "career awareness" program for elementary students will appear as it did last year at the Hamilton Elementary School.

But the career education "teams" that drew criticism at the junior and senior high have been dropped for the time being.

The Career Education Advisory Committee is in the process of re-planning the program, and further expansion of the federally-funded project has been halted until the advisory committee makes its recommendations to the school committee.

While schools will open on Wednesday in North Kingstown, Burton Froberg, superintendent, said that 10th grade students who attend the Coventry Vocational School should report to school on Tuesday afternoon.

He said the Coventry-bound students should contact the school department for more information about transportation arrangements.

Equipment worth $10,000 purchased for career ed.

Ten thousand dollars of audio-visual equipment has been purchased by the North Kingstown school department, using Career Education funds from the federal government, it was announced this week.

The equipment will be available for use at the start of the school year, and the equipment will enhance the usefulness of audio-visual materials already in the schools, officials of the Career Education Advisory Committee said.

Included in the purchase were cassette tape players, slide projectors, film strip viewers, phonographs and individual listening centers.

The Career Education Advisory group also said that teacher review of career education objectives is complete and added that school principals will present school faculties next week.

In a prepared release, the group also summarized the forms that Career Education will take in the up-coming school year.

"Career Education will be much the same as during the 1973-74 school year in the elementary schools. Teachers will be using methods and materials geared for increasing the students' awareness of choices available to them. As discussion of methods of teaching take place within the schools, the Career Education Advisory Committee will continue working to present the program to the public," the statement continued.

"At the middle and high school levels, Career Education will proceed more slowly as principals and faculties work out the methods of using the objectives and ideals of Career Education. Placement Director William Dimick will continue to work at the senior high school to place students in work positions in the community," it concluded.

Although forms uncertain

After criticism, career ed. goes on

By DAN MACKIE

Career Education in North Kingstown has been controversial, criticized, attacked, and sometimes misunderstood — and it will continue.

Right now, it is indefinite what specific forms the program will take. It will be implemented in the elementary grades in September, according to Orrin Laferte, program director, but will not be put into the higher grades until specific objectives and procedures are approved.

In an interview this week, Mr. Laferte said steps are being taken to hopefully eliminate some of the communication and misinformation problems that plagued the program this year.

The program was instituted "fairly quickly" last year to obtain federal funds, and now, he said, some of the objectives of the program are being reconsidered.

The objectives — what a child should learn — were general ones for the most part last year, he explained, and now the persons involved in planning will compile more specific goals.

During the summer, teacher, administrators and the citizen advisory committee will help compile the objectives, which will be reviewed by the school committee.

After that step, Mr. Laferte, explained, the planners will set out specific procedures to be used in teaching. A new development this year will be the listing of optional procedures for teachers to use, he said.

The point of the changes, are to make sure that the program isn't "dictated" to teachers and students, he remarked. He said the career education program will present teachers with various options and tell them "to weave them into what you're doing."

Also, the increased citizen participation in the planning "will help ensure expression of community feelings", Mr. Laferte said, which he suggested could result in more community understanding and acceptance.

When the present planning is completed, the program will be implemented into the upper grades, Mr. Laferte said.

He said federal authorities who fund the program have no objection to specific changes, unless the town rejects the main career education goals, a step that hasn't happened.

Mr. Laferte agreed that rushing the program this year has caused problems. "Very few had input into the procedures," he said, which meant teachers ended up with an inflexible "packaged deal".

The criticism directed at the program has been sometimes based on limited information, he said. But he added that the lack of available facts "was just as much our fault as anyone else's."

He said the career education advisory group should have been set up earlier, since it could have served as a "mouthpiece" for the program.

"Ultimately career education helps children to make wiser choices about the future," he characterized the purpose of the program.

In the process, the program uses careers as a motivator to learn basic skills, he said. He remarked that he is optimistic about the future of career education in general with one factor being possible — increased federal funds nationwide.

"It is better to go with a lot slowly than to go with a few too fast, he said, in explaining the slower method of implementing the program this year.

"Now, with input, we can design a new program."

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Student program provides earnings while learning

(Standard-Times Photo by Marcel Dufresne)

Field training

Front end suspension spread across the floor may be a mystifying sight to the layman, but Doug Northup, (r), is learning to put it back together at Kube Foreign Car on Boston Neck Road with the guidance of mechanic John Jacques. Other photos of student learners in action appear inside.

By MARCEL DUFRESNE

"I wish I had this kind of program when I was in school. I would have done a few things differently."

Earl Stickney, operator of Sherwood's Texaco on Post Road in North Kingstown, is a qualified car mechanic but he learned his trade the hard way working in a garage after he had left school for the last time.

Today, times have changed, and thanks to an innovative "student-learner" program at North Kingstown High School, 17-year-old Patrick Bowen can stay in school and learn automobile repair under Earl's tutelege at the same time.

Strictly speaking, there is no large-scale vocational or industrial training available at the high school, but the student learner program, under the direction of Placement Coordinator William Dimick offers a unique form of training using the community's businesses as a supply of instructors.

The student-learner program is part of the career education program and allows students to leave school at either 10:40 a.m. or noon each day and spend up to eight hours working, learning and earning money. Criticism of some areas of career education by parents last year resulted in cutbacks in the program this year, but the student learner set-up has continued to grow and gain attention and support of both students and parents.

Pat Bowen says he would have quit school if it weren't for the program, which allows him to work 40 hours a week at Earl's station while still taking courses in English, shop and physical education. A junior, Pat has several student-learner friends who would also have quit if it weren't for the program and all of them intend to graduate from North Kingstown High.

Pat first learned the relatively simple task of pumping gas, then moved on to conducting car inspections and now is doing minor repair and tune ups.

The program is set up in a

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In North Kingstown

These students can earn and learn

(Continued from page 1)

way that if a student wants to work on a given day, he must have been in school that day.

"If I want credit for working, I have to go to school that day. I have to do both to do one and fortunately I like both," he said.

Another requirement for students in the program is that they must maintain passing grades in all their school subjects, something many had trouble doing before but find easier now.

It might seem that such a requirement would turn some students off instead of on but last year the program grew from 45 in December to nearly 150 by June. As many of last year's students graduated, the number dropped, but enrollment has increased to over 100 full and part-time workers this year, according to Mr. Dimick.

Carrie Lee, 15, is one of many students in the program who could not function productively in a full day of school. By late morning she would become tired with going to classes and her lack of motivation was evidenced in her low and often failing grades.

Since September she has been the "girl Friday" at Aldon Ltd. in North Kingstown, a cleaning supply distributorship, answering phones, filing sales and tax reports, cleaning the office and even making telephone sales.

"By 11 o'clock, I used to be ready to go home. If I would have stayed in school full time I think my grades would have been the same," said Carrie, describing her school life before starting as a student learner. "Now I do what I like to do, I get paid for it, and I get credit for it."

A sophomore, Carrie, like many but not all student learners, had no plans for college and was looking forward to three long and very boring years of school. Now she enjoys her work and is taking courses that add to her already growing office skills. Aside from a required English course, she is now taking accounting and will soon take typing, in which she is already quite proficient. And so far, her grades have improved "a lot."

Alvin Lee, Carrie's father, is doubly proud of his daughter and impressed with the program. Caught in a unique situation, Mr. Lee, owner of Aldon Ltd., is both parent and employer to Carrie and gets to evaluate the student learner program from two points of view.

At first, he had doubts about whether or not his daughter should be working for him as a student learner. Assured by Mr. Dimick that it was proper, he took Carrie on and so far he is impressed on both counts.

As the employer, Mr. Lee said, "She was outstanding. She picked it up real fast and I'm not saying that just as a father. She's knowledgable and answers questions about the business. All my distributors think the world of her," he said.

As a parent, he is pleased with her improved performance in school.

"Her grades started nosediving and nothing seemed to pull her up. I decided to give her a try but I said if her grades didn't get up there she'd be back in school full-time."

He said her grade improvement has been "outstanding," and that he'll keep her on the job as long as she keeps her grades up.

In other cases, the change in the students' attitude and school performance has been even more noticeable, especially to the students themselves.

Doug Northup, 15, described his pre-student-learner school days this way:

"I used to just hang around in the lavs, smoking, the whole bit. I didn't really care. I was just waiting for classes to get out."

Last year, he had poor grades in three courses, was absent from classes between 20 and 25 times, and generally "wasn't learning anything."

Today he's working at Kane Foreign Car on Boston Neck Road and one of his employers calls him "highly motivated," although he has no background or experience in car repair.

His two bosses, Dave Bowens and Sandy Kane, have taken Doug under their wing and the results are obvious to everyone. He's only been absent one or two days, he goes to all his classes and his grades show a marked improvement. But in his own words, the most important thing is "now I'm getting out and learning something," which ironically is what is supposed to happen in school.

and he's "getting a chance to prove myself."

Doug feels his bosses are taking the program seriously, giving him the opportunity and materials to study mechanics at home at night. Sandy is also trying to give him an education outside of mechanics, an education about jobs, working, and dealing with fellow workers and customers.

"The work he does is fairly well regimented. Some jobs are tedious and repetitive. It's not so much letting him work on cars but we're giving him the background," he said. "Since he's starting at the bottom, he's learning about things that go on in any job."

While the program has been very successful with problem students, those with poor grades and the non-college bound, it is also open to those with college plans.

A group of 10 students, mostly seniors headed for college, are working as student learners, doing jewelry research at the high school for the Anson Jewelry Co. of Attleboro. Mostly honor students in science and math, the group gets to take their equations and formulas from the classroom into the practical process of measuring jewelry for plating.

Using those equations, they determine the total surface area of a particular piece of jewelry and pass the information on to the firm, which uses it in the plating process.

The students candidly revealed that the work is often "definitely monotonous," but conceded that they are getting some practical experience, learning to use certain measuring tools such as a micrometer for the first time, and making money.

ONE-WOMAN show is run by Carrie Lee as she learns and practices her office skills at Aldon Ltd.

One group of student learners make no money at all, however. They are volunteers, many of whom are also headed for college, who work in service areas donating their time in exchange for experience.

Cathy Laskie and Bill Powell are two such volunteers who work at the South County Regional Center in North Kingstown where simple contract work is done by mentally retarded clients.

Cathie, a volunteer there for more than a year, does other work with her clients such as supervising social activities, bowling sessions and other recreational pastimes. A junior at the high school, she is taking courses in domestic science and plans a career working with the retarded.

Bill has been at the center about a year and just recently started a paying apprenticeship as a silk-screener out of a financial need. Having worked there all summer in various programs, he's learned to enjoy the work and will continue there as a volunteer in his spare time.

The student learner program so far had a relatively good drop out rate, with just 15 of 150 students dropping out for a variety of reasons last year, and according to Mr. Dimick, "I'm getting more and more inquiries every day."

Mr. Dimick said the current bleak employment picture is having its affect on students, making them more practical and career-oriented.

"They're really starting to think about their future, that they have to earn a living before anything else," said the coordinator, who noted that he has a waiting list of over 100 students waiting for part-time jobs.

Mr. Dimick stressed the fact that student learners are not given jobs until they have proven they are working harder in their courses and that their behavior and attendance has improved. Parental permission is also required, he added.

"Absenteeism has really dropped off with these kids," he said, "both at school and on the job. They know that if they're absent, they'll be pulled off the job and back into school full-time and that's a tremendous deterrent."

Mr. Dimick likes to feel he's running a vocational school of sorts and saving the town money at the same time, since the equipment and instructors are being supplied by businessmen rather than by taxes. He also provides a service to the employers, supplying reliable and usually-willing workers and trainees, he said.

Mr. Dimick prefers to place a learner in a small business where he can get one-to-one instruction but admits that transportation problems, which are already serious, are worse when the businesses are scattered around this and other towns.

Despite the success of his program and its ready acceptance by many students, parents and teachers, Mr. Dimick prefers to give much of the praise to employers.

"Without the tremendous support of the employers in North Kingstown, this program couldn't have been nearly as successful. They deserve a lot of credit."

The Standard-Times, Thursday, January 2, 1975

Career education guideline copies now available

Copies of the guidelines for career education at the elementary school level, entitled "Awareness," are now available at the North Kingstown School Administration offices on Fairway Drive.

The guidelines, as prepared by an elementary school task force of 10 persons, was presented to the school committee recently by the Career Education Advisory Committee. The school board is currently seeking feedback from parents, teachers and members of the community on the awareness guidelines.

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Status to be probed

Career Education discussion Monday

By DAN MACKIE

Career Education has been one of the most talked about educational issues in recent North Kingstown history and the discussion will continue Monday night when the school committee holds a special meeting on the status of the program in the town's elementary schools.

That meeting will center around a 150-page report developed by a task force of teachers. The document has been endorsed by the career education advisory committee and Supt. Burton Froberg.

The teacher's report consists of guidelines for teaching career education in grades K-6. "This document is neither an all-encompassing set of regulations nor is it set in concrete," Mr. Froberg said in a letter to the committee. He said that individual teachers can expand and develop the ideas in the report for their own use.

Monday night's 7:30 p.m. session at the administration building also marks the first time that the Democratic-controlled school committee will review a portion of the career education program. The issue was one of the hottest in a year, 1974, that saw the dramatic turn-around in the make-up of the committee.

The career education document, which is available at the administration building for review, is named "Awareness" and focuses on ways to make children more aware of careers and of their own emotions.

It retains four of the basic goals for the program. They are: "to increase the self-awareness of each student, to assist each student in developing favorable attitudes about the personal, social, and economic significance of work, to assist each student in developing and practicing appropriate career decision-making skills, to assist in the development of the career-awareness of each student in grades K-6."

The first part of the report lists a large number of activities and projects to help children develop self-awareness. The area is further broken down to discuss exploration of values, feelings, relationships with other people and personal qualities.

"Elementary task force members gave special emphasis to the self-awareness goal, feeling that it is most important that a positive and true self image begin or continue de-

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Public invited to comment

Career Education topic Monday

(Continued from page 1)

velopment at this level," the report reads.

Under the proposal, children will be encouraged to explore their own values and learn to respect the values of others. The following segment of the report provides methods to teach children how to describe their own feelings and how to cope with them.

In one suggested exercise designed to make children aware of feelings, they are asked to make a "feelings indicator" that will show others how they feel at a given moment. The indicator on their desk could let others know that the child feels happy, sad or tired, for example.

The pupils are also taught the meanings of emotions through drawings, and by describing pictures. In an exercise that also requires imagination, the child is asked to write a story about how it would feel to be a familiar object such as a piece of bubble gum.

The reports also recommended making collages, use of pantomime and even a nature walk to explore various emotions. Students are encouraged to think about family and peer relationships.

Role playing, such as pretending to be a mother or father dealing with different situations is one suggested way to understand family relationships. For peer relationships, the report suggests an exercise sometime called a "trust walk."

In that exercise, students learn about trusting others by letting themselves be led blindfolded through an obstacle course by another pupil. As in other sections of the report, the teacher group also recommends the use of certain books for teaching.

Personal qualities are explored by drawing self-portraits and through activities that help children to think about what they are interested in. In the second section of the report, pupils are encouraged to develop favorable attitudes toward work, partly by understanding that all persons work whether in the home or at a business.

One exercise suggests that students interview their parents about their jobs, with questions about whether the parents enjoy their work and what kinds of tasks they perform while at work. Other exercises deal with why people work and the use of money along with developing responsibility.

In a section on decision-making, the task force endorsed contract teaching as one of the devices to encourage students to learn to make decisions. The task force stated that the best way to learn this is to actually make decisions, and at times, by discussing those decisions individually or in groups.

Other devices are to let the class make up behavior rules for use within guidelines set by a teacher. As a group, the class could also decide on games or special class projects, the task force suggested.

Decision-making activities should also show that some decisions are made previously by others such as school rules or parental rule and laws, it continues. "The degree to which students become involved in any of the decision-making situations should be dictated by their maturity level and ability to work independently," the task force concluded.

In the section on career awareness, students learn about different professions and what people involved in those professions do. On the primary level, the task force suggests that students learn about agriculture and natural resources, consumers and homemaking, construction and health, recreation, transportation, public service and fine arts and the humanities.

On the intermediate levels, students should learn about careers in the environment, business, communications, manufacturing, marine science, marketing and distribution, personal services, continued fine art and humanities, the report suggests.

In each of the general areas, students can learn about more specific careers. In the business and office "cluster" for example, jobs such as bookkeeper, key-punch operator, court clerk, bankteller, credit manager, attorney, realtor, tax accountant and programmer are given as examples.

Activities to learn about these jobs would include things such as math skills to learn about the use of money, setting up a "courtroom," field trips, or to use role playing to "try out" different careers.

Various sections of the report recommended the use of trips to increase career awareness along with the visiting of the schools by persons from the community. Another exercise suggests that students explore a particular career by investigating many aspects of that profession.

For example, the student is asked to check qualifications, duties, and educational planning for a certain career. They also look into the nature of the job itself, whether it is hazardous, for example, and finally decide whether or not they are interested in the career.

Mr. Froberg said this week that the guide for elementary grades will hopefully be followed by a series of guidelines for other levels.

The Standard-Times, Thursday, January 16, 1975

Sexism, racism charged

'Awareness' idea draws fire

By DAN MACKIE

A career education proposal for North Kingstown elementary pupils ran into a roadblock of criticism Monday night when it was hit with complaints of sexism, racism, and a charge that the plan represents an "invasion of privacy" of school children.

The school committee eventually voted to give the proposal back to school officials for furthur study. They will attempt to return with a proposal that will eliminate some of the problems that developed this week.

Most of the criticism was directed toward the "self-awareness" portion of the elementary career education guide. That segment had been emphasized by an 18-teacher task force that developed the guide, but numerous persons, including committeeman David Camp and councilwoman Marguerite Neubert, strongly objected to it.

The proposal contained activities to encourage children to explore their own feelings and values, but critics said that elementary school children are not ready for such activities. They said they objected to what they described as "tampering" with the children's emotions.

Mr. Camp led school committee criticism of the document. He referred specifically to one suggested activity that asked children to describe their feelings toward an imaginary character named "hairy".

"How would you get along with Hairy?" the children are asked. "Draw a picture of why Hairy would like you" the excercise continues. "What in God's name does this have to do with a child learning arithmetic", Mr. Camp asked.

Career education director Orrin Lafferte defended the self-awareness segment, along with several teachers and principals. He said if a child has a clear picture of himself, it will

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Career ed's 'awareness' program draws criticism

(Continued from page 1)

aid in the decision-making process. "Self-image affects achievement in just about everything", he continued.

Several teachers said that self-awareness was being taught by teachers before the career education program began and they defended their role in helping children develop values. "I'd much rather that they be taught by a teacher than by television," one said.

But critics replied that such instruction need not be part of the career education program. Mr. Camp later proposed that the self-awareness portion of the document be taken out of the program, but his motion was not seconded.

Beth Sullivan another committee member said she felt there were too many negative emotions brought out in the proposal. She gave the example of an exercise where pupils complete sentences, including one that begins, "When may parents argue I..."

How many parents want their children to answer to an outsider when there is a fight at home, Charles Daniels objected. He said teachers are not trained for this type of counseling.

"I think we're invading the home if we do this," Ms. Sullivan commented. She also described the document as "blatantly exist". She later cited the example of an excercise that asks children to describe the noise that women make when they see a mouse.

Several persons also complained about an excercise that asked children to associate colors with emotion and gave the example of connecting the color black with fear. They said it promoted racist tendencies.

proach them with problems they have at home, since not all parents discuss them with children. Opponents of the proposals said that while "free expression of emotions" is good for children, schools shouldn't be working to encourage discussion of personal matters.

Paul Johnson of the committee agreed that values must be taught in school, saying that school behavior is related to a child's values. But he suggested that the issues should not be part of the career education program.

"For the moment, I think we ought to divorce it from career education or we'll never get through," he said. Mr. Froberg suggested that the proposal writers delete the objectionable part of the program, but that the committee adopt the rest of the proposal.

"There are a few things in the proposal that raise the few hairs left on my head," he quipped. At that point Mr. Camp made his bid to have the entire self-awareness portion dropped.

"This area has been the single one that has kept us from making progress," he contended. "Let's get to the business of career education." Vice Chairman Charles E. Morris then suggested that the committee give the administration a chance to iron out the problems.

Proponents of the proposal took the tack that despite imperfections, the guidelines would still be useful for teachers. They said individual teachers could modify the suggested activities to eliminate racist or sexist elements.

Critics charge that the self-awareness portion of the document violated federal guidelines of what career education should be. But others said if the school committee dropped self-awareness, which was included in the federal proposal, the town would then have to re-negotiate the program with federal officials.

Mr. Lafferte denied that the program was teaching specific values. Instead, he said it taught children the process of examining their own values and understanding values that other persons have.

"You'd be surprised at the sophistication of some children," a teacher told the committee. "They need and like to talk about how they feel. Being a teacher, my lips are sealed when I hear about something from home," she said.

Other teachers contended that children sometimes ap-

Career education post filled for high school

Anthony Santaniello of Mt. Hope Avenue in Jamestown has been named to a $14,300 a year post as a placement counselor for the career education program in North Kingstown High School.

The selection came after a closed session was held after a school committee meeting on Monday night to discuss his qualifications. The appointment drew several comments from the audience at the meeting, however, they were aimed at the career education program itself and not at Mr. Santaniello.

Charles Jones, a member of the curriculum advisory committee, questioned the added expense for another employee in the career education program, since he said more than half of the federal funds will be going toward salaries.

School officials said Mr. Santaniello will work with non-college students in counseling and will work along with Placement Director William Dimick in job finding.

Some persons at the meeting questioned whether it is fair to hire new employees for career education since the program could be discontinued in the future. Officials said that Mr. Santaniello was aware of the program's statues and added that the school department could decide to continue the position even without the career education program.

"It's a tragedy it's in the career education budget," siad J. Thomas Kidd. He argued that the post should be placed outside of the career education program. "We should have it irrespective of career education," he concluded.

Mr. Santaniello has been a director of guidance in two private high schools in Worcester and was director of a Title 1 reading program in Central Falls.

He has also been a consultant to various reading programs in Rhode Island. Mr. Santaniello is a graduate of Holy Cross College in Worcester and received his masters degree from Assumption College.

The Standard-Times, Thursday, February 6, 1975

Controversy erupts again

Textbook order delayed

The issue of textbook censorship was raised at a North Kingstown School Committee meeting this week, but instead of the usual topics such as sex education, the group is concerned with the town's own career education program.

The committee postponed a request for books and materials for the program and directed the school administration to check the listings for "objectionable" matter. The issue in question is whether any of the materials are designed to teach "self-awareness."

Self-awareness is a portion of a curriculum proposal drawn up by teachers and career education director Orrin Laferte. At a recent public hearing, the self-awareness program was hit with charges that ran the gamut from sexism, racism, and invasion of privacy to simple incompetence.

This week, Mr. Laferte submitted a request for funds for the overall program at the town's elementary and middle schools. But before long, his request was receiving more of the flack that has plagued the program almost from its inception.

Charles Daniel, an outspoken critic of the way the program is operating, led the onslaught on the testbook requests. He warned the committee that if the listing included self-awareness it could soon be facing a class-action suit to block the program.

A member of the curriculum advisory committee, he said he was also upset that the committee was allowing career education officials to independently choose books when his group had recommended that all teachers in the system cooperate in the selection of books for subjects such as math and social science.

"I want to know if you've given career education an open hand?" he told the committee. Speaking emotionally, he continued to question the pur-

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Controversy erupts again

Textbook order delayed

(Continued from page 1)

chases. "I don't want to be an obstructionist, but I've had it", he commented.

The committee received the requests for the first time Monday night and had not yet reviewed the listings themselves. But vice-chairman Charles E. Morris Jr. assured the audience that the committee would give the matter full consideration.

"It's not our purpose to go against any other committee," he said. He added that the school committee is interested only in approving the non-controversial portions of the requests.

"How are we as lay people to know which ones are self-awareness," Committee member Beth Sullivan mused. "Is it our duty to pass over everything, item by item?" she continued.

Referring to the recent controversy about school committee censorship of books in other states, she said, "I don't think we should take over the day-to-day operations of the schools."

The committee later voted to turn the matter over to the school administration for further consideration. Director of Instruction George Sprague will determine how the review is conducted, Supt. Burton Froberg said on Tuesday.

While the committee postponed a decision on the purchases, they did release funds for field trips for the elementary and middle grades under the career education program.

The book requests are due to be resubmitted to the committee at its next meeting later this month.

School committee: 'best show in town'

Dear Sir:

The school committee meeting is getting to be the best show in town. Unfortunately the non-spectators as well as the spectators are paying for this show.

Item: The school committee has appointed several citizen committees to provide input in various areas. Two of them — the career education comittee (which ought to be put out of its misery) and the curriculum advisory committee (which ought to be given something to do) are now taking to petty public jurisdictional disputes. The school committee — hearing these disputes — has decided that the school administration ought to get these citizens committees on track-working together.

How in the world can the school administration straighten out the citizen committees when the group that appointed the committees will neither give direction to these citizen groups, nor accept any form of responsibility for them? Tragedy and comedy.

But then I have come t expect this from this group of school committee persons. They discuss sexism, nonpolitics, racism, and self awareness; they dilute themselves with commitments, they delude us with suggestions to the administration and they make pretty speeches. Yes, they do make pretty speeches.

They do everything except try to get a handle on the problem of a lack of town — wide school curriculum and the problem of careless management of our school system.

The central administration has received enough suggestions from the "new school committee" as some of them like to call themselves — to keep them busy for several years.

Unfortunately the administration has received little of that precious ingredient called intelligent direction. This "new" school committee was elected to provide that ingredient. I hope it starts fairly soon.

Robert G. Judd
North Kingstown

Some options for NK schools

Dear Sir:

The schools of North Kingstown contain many of the ingredients which educators claim are especially advantageous for a quality education. Some of these ingrediants are:

1. High-salaried administrators.

2. Built-in planning time for faculty on Wednesday afternoons.

3. Excellent teacher-student ratio. (Several upper-phase classes in the senior high school now have eight to 10 students; although this is not the case throughout, the trend toward offering individualized instruction is in evidence.)

4. Appropriated federal funding ($111,000 annually) for Career Education.

5. Citizen involvement in providing free services and consultation in the areas of: curriculum development, organizational development, finances, tutoring, educational research, and communications of needs. Organizations and committees providing these include, but are not limited to, the following: Citizens for Education, The Career Education Advisory Committee, The Curriculum Advisory Committee, The Concerned Parents' Group, The Davisville Involvement Group, LINKS (Laymen in North Kingstown Schools), The Physical Education Study Committee, and the Financial Advisory Team.

6. An outstandingly well-qualified and competent school committee.

Despite these positive ingredients, North Kingstown Schools do not have:

1. System-wide, sequential curricula in use, in grades K-8. (For background information, note the Preliminary Report and the Minority Report of the Curriculum Advisory Committee, submitted to the School Committee in November and published as a supplement to the Standard-Times on Jan. 16.)

2. Evidence of both financial and educational accountability at the administrative level. (As stated by Peter and Hull - 1969, "The children's education appeared farthest from the administrator mind.")

3. Implementation of an adequate or legally enforceable program in Career Education. The recent school committee hearing on the Career Education Awareness book prepared for use in the elementary schools exposed to the public the book's sexist and racist overtones. The final regulations for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 are being published this month in the Federal Register by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). These regulations ban sex discrimination in federally-assisted education programs and institutions.

4. An academic and social climate which encourages achievement, vocational proficiency, and self-discipline for secondary students.

5. Evidence of reading and math proficiency, as measured by the 1974 Iowa Tests in grades four and eight, which compares adequately to skills measurements in nearby school districts. The administration has consistently avoided the establishment of testing and other evaluation programs in general, and particularly in Career Education, which can provide the public with information on strengths and weaknesses needed to evaluate the schools' general, academic, and vocational performances.

6. Concrete action to meet the needs expressed by individuals and organizations, committees and sub-committees, who have worked for literally thousands of hours toward the goals of quality education.

I implore the North Kingstown School Committee to take immediate and positive action to correct the educational inadequacies which I have listed or to consider the adoption of an alternative to be made available to parents of students who are not being afforded the quality of educational opportunities to which they have a right. The alternative, which I strongly urge you to consider, is that of a voucher system whereby North Kingstown parents can receive per pupil cost reimbursements to be used to send their children to either parochial, private, or other public schools which do offer a good education in all respects. I am requesting immediate consideration of this choice of options, so that children in this community can be assured a quality education beginning with the 1975-76 academic year.

Nancy V. Kidd
North Kingstown

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Some alternatives on career ed.

Dear Sir:

Congratulations on your award for coverage of the career education story.

Many months have passed since the school department first introduced career education to the town, and we are no closer to a finished product for our students than we were in August, 1973.

There is no desire to rehash all that has been said or written in the past year, but some positive course of action must be taken on this issue, and soon. Time for renewal of the federal grant, for its third and final year, grows ever close. Too much time, effort and tax money already have been expended in pursuit of a program that has met with opposition from much of the community.

It is believed that those responsible for developing the career education program for our school system have been far more concerned with projecting their own personal interpretation of career education than with designing a program that would benefit the youth of this community. This has created an impasse which has resulted in an utter waste of funds and duplication of effort. How many students, to date, have achieved any measureable benefit from the present hit-or-miss implementation?

Reams of paper have been consumed describing career education as the means of developing values, self awareness and decision making skills in our students. These are elusive terms, impossible to define! We are expected to accept an education program for our children based on such dubious goals. Public opinion has been strongly opposed to accepting such a program. Neither the school committee nor the school administration seems to have heard a single protest.

12/4/25

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Public Law 90-576 (the authority for career education grants), Part D (the section covering the North Kingstown grant) contains no reference to, nor requisites for, projects emphasising goals of self awareness, etc. It does set forth some very positive concepts for projects that could benefit our students, be easily intergrated into a curriculum, and be acceptable to the adult community. Stated quite simply these are: (a) projects to familiarize students with the broad range of occupations and requisites for careers in various fields and (b) projects that provide students the opportunity to pursue career preparation and-or career experience.

The following are recommendations for consideration as alternatives to our present course of action on career ed.

I. At the elementary level emphasis should be centered on developing in students a familiarity with the importance of all levels of the working world rather than exploring specific occupation fields. It is believed that this could be most effectively accomplished within a social studies curriculum. This was also a conclusion of the subcommittee on Industrial Arts of the Curriculum Advisory Committee.

II. It is believed that the greatest and most beneficial impact can be achieved at the middle school level. Having acquired basic academic skills at the elementary level, middle school students should be allowed the opportunity to widely explore the world or work through classroom activities and career related field trips. They should be exposed to the opportunities that await them in high school and beyond. This could be accomplished through development of an elective course designed for exploration of specific occupations and the improvement and expansion of the Industrial Arts in middle schools. Exploration of the working world would assist middle school students in planning their high school experience to the best advantage.

III. The preliminary report from the Curriculum Advisory Committee contained excellent recommendations for improvements to the Industrial Arts program, especially at the high school. The program outlined in the subcommittee's report on the Industrial Arts is far more comprehensive and student orientated than any proposals for the high school level in the present career education program. The school committee should give immediate and serious consideration to this subcommittee report as a means of introducing potential career opportunities for high school students.

An "Occupational Opportunities Center" should be developed and established at the high school. In addition to being an information center, this should be a unification of all job placement and work-study programs. This center would provide maximum exposure of these programs and ensure service to all students.

A high school course catalogue should be designed containing detailed course content description and prerequisites, if any. It should include a cross reference between courses offered and suggested studies in related career fields. This catalogue should be made available throughout the school year in media centers at middle schools.

It is believed that development of a career education program, as outlined, is possible under the terms of our federal grant and that funds from this grant could be used for renovation of the Industrial Arts programs at the middle schools and the high school. It is envisioned that these recommendations could be implemented for 1975-76.

If we are to accept the idea of career education as necessarily beneficial to our students then it must become as much a part of a curriculum as possible. The Director of Instruction must be charged with full and direct responsibility for its development and implementation, as he would for any other facet of instruction. Only personnel employed in our school system, in positions funded by the North Kingstown school budget, should be used to assist the Director in this endeavor. We must eliminate the costly additional positions currently funded by the grant, that will result in added expense to the town beyond the term of the grant. Immediate consideration must be given to the necessary curriculum development, and future expenditures should be limited to those items required by this curriculum. Great care must be taken to stop any additional waste of these public funds.

The school committee must take action on the career education issue immediately. We can no longer afford to allow this program to deter them from equally or more important issues within our school system.

Margaret Jones
North Kingstown

Career ed. renewal set Monday

North Kingstown's Career Education program is up for renewal on Monday night, and the now-familiar controversy over the project will no doubt continue at that time.

For more than a year, there have been scattered calls for scrapping the program, and they are almost sure to surface next week. The school committee will approve or reject the third year of the program, which is federally funded.

If they reject the funding, three staff members would join the list of suspended faculty in North Kingstown. On that night, the committee is also due to vote on a proposal to suspend 58 teachers in an effort to eliminate 44 staff positions.

In most towns where they have been initiated, Career Education programs have drawn little public attention. But in North Kingstown, a heated discussion erupted when some parents complained that the course of study wasn't teaching their children traditional skills such as reading and math.

They also objected to the methods used in the program. In response, the school committee appointed a citizen's advisory group to help planning and to promote better communication. For a time, the issue remained quiet this summer.

But Career Education was in the spotlight once more recently when a new curriculum was proposed for the program. Charges of racism, sexism, and invasion of privacy met that effort.

The curriculum went back to the drawing boards, and the committee later voted to hold up funds for materials and books for the program when some people complained that the books were unsuitable — for many of the same reasons in the curriculum dispute.

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An end to an experiment

Career education meets its Waterloo

2/27/75

By DAN MACKIE

After several long and drawn-out battles, North Kingstown's Career Education program finally met its own Waterloo this week at the hands of the school committee.

Ironically, although money is hard to come by these days, the committee voted with little hesitation to give up $100,000 in federal funds as the hefty price of scrapping the program.

"Career Education has been circling the field with nowhere to land," was the blunt assessment offered by committee member David Camp. He called the effort "a year and a half of unproductive wheel-spinning."

The committee voted 5-1 to end the long-controversial program, which has drawn heavy fire almost since its inception. The overwhelming sentiment was surprising, since the committee had given few hints of what was to come.

There had been a long process of "mending" the program in an effort to placate critics and to foster open communication with the community, but this week the committee said in effect that further effort is useless.

Before the vote was taken, Orrin Laferte, director of the federally-funded project, delivered a kind of ultimatum to the committee. He asked for the committee's full enthusiastic support or he said the program would fail.

"We have to go one way or the other", he said. "It's been my job to deal with an awfully hostile environment," he claimed and he asked for a show of support.

The committee's ultimate response was an almost unanimous thumbs-down on the program. The rejection had also been recommended by Supt. Burton Froberg, who suggested that the committee continue the job placement portion of the high school program run by William Dimick.

In rejecting the program, the committee voted to terminate all three staff positions in the Career Education program. Mr. Dimick and Mr. Laferte have been with the program from the start, while Anthony J. Santaniello of Jamestown was hired as a placement counselor just recently.

The only dissenter in the vote, Committeeman Charles E. Morris Jr., said he would have preferred to delay any final decision on the program until the deadline. The committee could have waited until April 15 to make a decision.

He said he had still hoped that the problems of the program could be ironed out in the short time remaining. "I also personally do not believe that some of the problems were as bad as some people made them out to be," he said.

But according to chairman Albert N. D'Amico, "the program got off to a bad start as far as the town's concerned. The school committee feels it would be unsuccessful again in the third year," he explained.

He said the committee has more important priorities to take up next year, concluding "we could best serve the community in other areas." The usual vocal opponents of the program remained quiet at the meeting, apparently struck with surprise when the superintendent recommended ending the project.

But defenders of the project made emotional pleas to save the program's life. Stephen A. Pierce, head of the Career Education Advisory Committee, said "the entire principle of the school system has been put to the test."

He said the schools must introduce

children to the worlds of careers and defended the self-awareness portion of the curriculum. He said schools must meet these needs of children "or they'll be useless in this society."

The Monday night meeting had many emotional moments and one outraged woman hissed at committee member Jim Van West as he explained his vote. At several other times, the crowd of more than 100 showed its enthusiastic support for the program.

But the present school committee, which inherited the program from an earlier board, showed no inclination to adopt it on its own. Superintendent Froberg said it would be impossible to change the program in the short time remaining in such a way so as to please its critics and meet federal guidelines.

Monday night's Waterloo was the final battle for a program that has long drawn fire from parents and some teachers. But the opposition was far more unanimous as Monday night's meeting showed.

Still, the issue remained a thorn in the side of both school committees which oversaw the program. Problems began several months after its inception when parents began complaining that the program wasn't teaching their children the traditional skills such as reading and arithmetic.

This week, Mr. Laferte offered the estimate that the program was hurt by its special status and its high visibility. He said that he and the project were in a "fish bowl" for all to see.

When people saw that the program was doing things differently, they began to question the methods that were being used, he said. The program began as a pilot effort, and the opposition of parents blocked expansion of the program this year.

At that time, the former school

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(Continued from page 1)

committee declared that the program was a victim of a lack of communication and formed a citizens advisory group to assist in future planning. Meanwhile, an independent group, Citizen's for Education, also formed as a response to the program.

From that point on, members of the public gave Career Education careful scrutiny and almost any mention of the program at a school committee meeting threatened to provoke angry exchanges.

The prime example of Career Education's volatile nature was the proposal last month of a curriculum for the program. Most curriculum proposals draw little, if any, public attention, but this time the document was hit with spectacular charges that ranged from "invasion of privacy" to "racism" and "sexism".

The attacks were directed at a self-awareness portion of the program, and the school committee later directed Mr. Laferte to purge that section from the curriculum. The troubles didn't stop there, though.

When the director submitted a request for books and materials, critics charged that some of the items could be used to teach the "banned" curriculum of self-awareness. The committee then was faced with the unwanted task of reviewing all the books.

It was the last in a long line of troubles for the program.

THE STANDARD - TIMES
A Page of Opinion

Unfortunate decision

After two years of implementation and even more time in planning, the North Kingstown Career Education program went down in somewhat inglorious defeat last week via a 5-1 school committee vote.

The decision in effect rejects a continuation of the planned third year of the controversial program that would have been funded by the federal government to the tune of $100,000. Had the school committee voted in favor, the program would have continued another year and the town next year would have had the option of either picking up the cost of the program or dropping it completely in 1976.

The program involved some well-received basic ideas, some admittedly faulty innovations, many thousands of dollars in funds, scores of jobs, hundreds of students, thousands of parents, protests, several stormy hearings, the creation of lay committees and the institution of several studies. With the notable and praise-worthy exception of some aspects of the program, Career Education is dead. Last week's decision was decisive to be sure but unfortunate.

With scarcely three months in office under its belt, the new school committee has shown fortitude in dealing with some of the burning problems within the school system. It is questionable with all the other problems confronting the school system whether the school committee had time to gather enough balanced insight to make a sound decision on the fate of a whole program.

This question is worrisome particularly when one considers that the pilot program still had a year's trial to run and that continuation would have cost the town only a nominal sum.

It could be argued that public opinion was against continuation of the program. Granted, there was and is a considerable amount of sentiment against the program. But we ask are the 40-50 parents that regularly attend school committee meetings or are the 100-odd that turned out at hearings on career education representative of the feelings of thousands of parents in North Kingstown? What is the public sentiment on career education? Was the "public opinion" on career education determined largely by a vocal, numerical minority? We question whether the decision to kill career education by some committee members was not a knee-jerk reaction spurred on by the criticisms of a relative few.

We would be the last to hold career education flawless. There was a lot of truth in Committee Member David Camp's comment last week that the program "spun wheels" for 18 months. Indeed it did. But many apparently got something out of it — teachers as well as students.

The main problem we have with last week's decision was whether the sentiment that culminated in the committee's vote resulted largely from dissatisfaction with the program itself or with the administration of that program. After observing, covering and commenting on the career education program for close to four years we can only conclude that the main fault lay with the administration. The career education program is dead not because the concept behind it was poor but because the administration of that concept was in many instances inept and insensitive.

With one more year and with sweeping administrative changes, the program may have had a chance. To a large degree that opportunity was swept away last week and that was most unfortunate.

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'No to mediocrity'

Dear Sir:

To begin with, I thought that Mrs. Jones' letter to the Standard-Times a few weeks ago was a very sensible recommendation concerning career education. I hope the school committee will take her suggestions to heart and act on them.

The recent vote to discontinue the federally-sponsored Career Education Program will deprive our school system of some badly needed funds that could have been used to begin true implementation of the career education approach. However, I do not see this as a failure attributable to our present school committee, but rather a very serious indictment of the school administration. To have accepted these federal funds for two years and then to have the superintendent of schools admit that there was no program, is a complete disgrace. It is a very poor reflection on the quality of our educational administration.

This failure is partly due to the nature of the program, that it was not system wide. It is partly due to a lack of judgment on the part of the coordinator, and it is partly due to a lack of supervision by the former school committee. But most of all the failure of the career education program indicates a general lack of educational leadership at the very top of the administrative hierarchy. We should have a right to expect our educational administrators to make programs work.

I am in favor of a career-oriented program of studies as part of our basic educational philosophy. Career education should be an approach to educating people for jobs as well as for college. I believe some of the complaints registered by parents stemmed from their desire to see a maximum of resources devoted to preparing their children for college. They did not like the possibility that a son or daughter might be lured into taking a job instead. This is especially true if the job might not meet the parents' occupational class expectations. This is a natural-enough self interest reaction on the part of parents who themselves are well educated. I think it should be recognized however, and dealt with explicitly if we are to move ahead with programs for those students who do not go immediately from high school to college.

It is my hope that the present school committee will not let the idea and philosophy of career education die with the cutoff of federal funds. I don't think that they will, from what I know about them. It is a difficult path to follow and as North Kingstown becomes less of a suburb and more of a city in the years ahead, the need for career education will become even greater. Also, the natural pressure by those who want their children to go to college will not be met by much pressure from the other side. Parents who don't care about the schools and think teachers are a bunch of overpaid slackers are not going to contribute much to their childrens' education. That responsibility rests on those of us who do care, regardless of our own education, income or any other social characteristic we may possess. Part of this responsibility is to see that our school system does its best for all children in equipping them to contribute to society and to fulfilling their own potential.

In my opinion we could make a nice start by finding an administrator to head our school system whose strength is educational leadership; someone who can inspire our teachers, principals and administrators to achieve excellence. At budget time some people say "we can't afford a Cadillac, all we need is a stripped down model". I for one do not have mediocrity as my standard and I am not willing to settle for it. Regardless of our own feelings about brands of automobiles I would hope that we can have a school system that we are proud of because it is good. If I said we should have the best public school system of any town in the country I would probably be laughed at. Well, let the laughter die down and then let us do it.

Howard H. Foster Jr.
North Kingstown

School board congratulated

Dear Sir:

The decision of the school committee to abandon the Career Education program certainly deserves the attention of every North Kingstown resident. When school committees throughout the nation are urging and demanding that educators utilize all of the federal money available, our school committee has abandoned a program which entails the loss of $100,000. What does it all mean?

I am not familiar enough with the program to comment on its merits, but I am quite aware of how federal money for education is being used.

Our school committee deserves a salute for its integrity, for its refusal to be bought by federal funds, for its refusal to allow federal funds to dictate local school curricula, and for its foresight in recognizing that federal money is also tax money and not manna from heaven to be used indiscriminately just because it is there.

In this action our school committee has shown that it will use federal funds when the programs financed by them are of benefit to our youngsters, and consistent with the school system's policies and curriculum. It is to be congratulated.

John McKeon
Saunderstown

Career education was valuable

Dear Sir:

"Boy, did we have fun today, Dad! We went to URI to the dental hygienist place and we got to X-ray the dummy."

That was the bubbling excitement aroused in my small fourth grader after a recent field trip paid for from career education funds.

How can the school committee abolish a program that has so much good in it? — a program paid for by federal funds and that local funds cannot pick up?

If the school committee would lift their heads from the day to day running of the schools perhaps they would learn that it's possible to emphasize "Basics" and keep career education too.

It is possible, you know, to walk and chew gum at the same time.

Philip J. Willis
Saunderstown

A student protests

Dear Sir:

As everyone who reads this letter must know, the Career Education program has been given the axe. The school committee formally announced that decision on Feb. 24 before a full house of citizens. It is because of that decision that I write this.

Before I get down to business I will tell you that:

1. I am a member of the Career Education Advisory Committee, or at least I was. You see, as a result of the discontinuation of the Career Ed. program the CEAC has also been given the axe.

2. I am all for the Career Ed. (CE) program.

3. And I am a 9th grader at the North Kingstown Senior High School.

I write this letter so that I can air my opinions about both the CE program and the people who were involved in it. I

(Please turn to page 5)

Board's decision was 'unjust, unfair'

(Continued from page 4)

know that this letter is after the fact, and that writing it will not change the school committee's decision, but I feel that it should be told.

Career Ed. had many fine points about it. Let's take these one at a time.

One of these fine points is the controversy generated by the program. Suddenly, because of CE, people really began to feel concerned about the quality of the education that their child was being taught. It was amazing the response to the school committee's decision to try it out for three years. People everywhere offered their opinions, people really cared. This is good now the teachers and administrators had to keep on their toes.

Something more than concern was generated by the controversy. It was the formation of citizen groups to monitor the actions of the administration. Notable among these were the Citizens For Education group (CFE), the Career Education Advisory Committee (CEAC), and the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC). This was (is) also good. It again showed the interest the public had in the education their children were receiving.

Now for the greatest fine point of all — what the students were actually being taught under this system. The things that were taught that were peculiar to CE can be placed into two groups:

1. Work and job related and
2. self awareness and values related.

The work related aspect of the CE program was that which gave it its name (A very misleading name at that). This part of the program opened up the world of occupations to the student. It showed the student the choices he had and allowed him to delve into some of these occupations, i.e. a student who was interested in being a doctor or a nurse may, as part of the program, could visit a hospital and interview personnel that work there to see how they feel about their jobs and what they may have to do. This is extremely important because it helps prepare a student for the world he will be entering after his schooling is finished, and it helps him to make a choice as to what field he would enter into. This is essential if we expect him to enter a field ready to cope with the situation.

The self-awareness and values part of the program is the portion that raised all the trouble. Somehow people felt that teaching self awareness and values was not the schools' job — it was the parents job. Those people felt that the schools should teach just the regular courses, i.e., math, sciences, social sciences, English, and foreign languages.

This can be shown to be true by a statement made by David Camp, a member of the school committee, 'what does self awareness have to do with math' (that is not a direct quote, but it approximates what he said).

This is the wrong attitude. self awareness and values should have a place in the classroom. When I was in elementary school my 6th grade teacher told me that school was supposed to help develop a sound mind and a sound body. This explanation may create a problem what is the definition of 'sound mind'? The definition for 'sound' is as follows: free from flaw or defect; not diseased or healthy; firm, strong, healthy. (The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary).

In my opinion a sound mind is not one that is taught just to add, divide, know the names of all the continents, etc. If that was all there was to a healthy mind all we would have to do is put a computer in a man's body and expect him to become an active member of society.

Come on. There is more to it than that. We have to make decisions, we have to have a set of morals, and we must be able to communicate with ourselves. We may not get all of this at home. School should at least have a part in developing these things. Who knows, it may [illegible]

It is amazing that such a controversy should arise over such a simple thing as teaching values, decision making skills and attempts to instill [illegible] (the teaching of [illegible] groups). I realize that some people feel there may be a potential privacy, but I think that maybe some people feel the school is making an attempt to take over the home. Believe me, it will never happen. It would only be an aid, or a supplement, to what is taught at home.

All in all a lot of good has already come of CE. It makes one wonder why the school committee wasn't willing to use the $100,000 that the federal government would have given us to run the program for another year. The cost to the town would have been minimal, and it would have saved on the budget. It makes one ask how the school committee could cancel a program the town wouldn't have had to pay for. It makes me wonder whether they were acting in the best interests of the schools or whether they were acting for some other interests instead.

What really makes the school committee's decision such a shame is all the work put into the program by so many people. Special commendation would have to go to Orin Lafrete, who really put in a lot of work for the program and bore most of its weight on his shoulders. And thanks should be extended to all the teachers who worked so hard to get it together. It really makes the school committees decision unjust and unfair; just plain stupid.

But what could we expect: all we had to work with was a hostile school committee, a few hostile and boisterous citizens. You know the type — they go to all the town meetings just to make a nuisance of themselves; and a favorable public who instead of going to meetings to support CE, just stayed home and let someone else do it. Unfortunately there was no one.

But we all must face facts. Career Education is gone, and with it went some of the quality education we had before. Its passing has taught us something though, we now know that in order to get what we want we have to stand up and fight for it. Career Education was great while it lasted. It may have left us, but its memory will linger on.

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